

# Accent

AN AVILA UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION



**Ahmad Ashkar '04** knows that changing the world may not be easy, but he's doing his part to make it a better one for those in need.

*FEATURED ALUMNUS • PAGE 6*

SPRING 2014

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# Letter from the President

Alumni and Friends,

You hear me talk about the University's mission and what it means to uphold and apply the values and tenets of our founding Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Of course, I realize that such talk is meaningless if not supported by action which affirms this mission. As you thumb through the pages of this issue of *Accent*, you'll see that the actions of our alumni, faculty, students and staff speak much louder than my words ever could.

Key to our mission and outlined in our six Centennial Initiatives is that we prepare our students to make contributions to society on a global scale. The challenges of a 21st-century society demand that students are able to function with high levels of intercultural knowledge and skills. They must be prepared to touch the world and change it. We must ensure that our graduates have a competitive advantage in the global economy and know how to make lifelong contributions to their world.

What finer example of these capabilities than the subject of this issue's cover story, Ahmad Ashkar (page 6). He is a young man, a first-generation American, who came to Avila through a circuitous route, but maximized his experience, both in the classroom and in athletics, and today is finding solutions to many of the world's greatest challenges through social entrepreneurship. And, in many of these endeavors, he's working side by side with former President Bill Clinton.

Elsewhere, we have students engaged in making Kiva and FINCA microloans to impoverished people throughout the world (see pages 14 and 15) and interdisciplinary courses taking students to foreign lands, such as the upcoming Food and Culture trip to South Korea.

Closer to home, two major renovations to facilities on campus have begun as a result of the generosity of our alumni and friends in helping to raise \$9.3 million to receive a \$1 million challenge grant from the J.E. and L.E. Mabey Foundation. The existing Hooley-Bundschu Library will be fully renovated to create a Learning Commons, and the Marie Joan Harris CSJ, Ph.D. Science & Health Complex will be established in O'Rielly Hall.


In addition, the University recently engaged Trozzolo Communications Group to better reflect our brand messages. We want to say it loud and clear - Avila is an extraordinary place where students become their best and bring out the best in others. Inspiring the best in us all. Henceforth, our tagline: Be Inspired. In the next few months, you'll see more of this and as a result, I hope you will have renewed inspiration about your relationship with Avila.

Your actions make this inspiration possible. With your continued support, we will continue to serve record numbers of students and prepare them to go out and make a difference - at home and around the globe.

Gratefully,



Ronald A. Slepitza, Ph.D., CSJA  
President



*"We want to say it loud and clear — Avila is an extraordinary place where students become their best and bring out the best in others."*



# Accent

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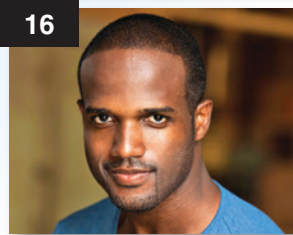
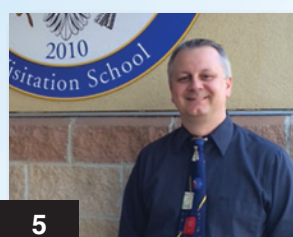
SPRING 2014



## ON THE Cover

Ahmad Ashkar '04 appears with former U.S. President Bill Clinton to accept the \$1 million Hult Prize to help eliminate food insecurity in developing countries.

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It started nearly 1 ½ years ago when four representatives from Avila University drove to Tulsa, Okla. and the headquarters of the J.E. & L.E. Mabee Foundation to solicit help in funding capital improvements on the Avila campus.

What resulted was a challenge from the Foundation: Raise \$9.3 million toward a new Learning Commons and the Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D. Science & Health Complex by April 9, 2014, and it would give \$1 million to the University for completion of those projects.

On Monday, March 31, Joe Fahey, Centennial Campaign Co-Chair and Board of Trustees member, announced to a room full of contributors and dignitaries in the soon-to-be Learning Commons that the challenge had been met and Avila would receive the \$1 million Mabee Challenge grant!

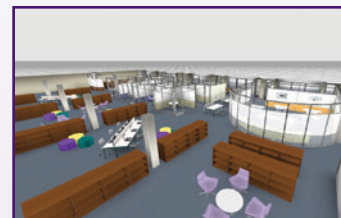
None of this would have been possible without the staunch support of alumni, friends and supporters, including a \$1 million contribution from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and \$600,000 from The Goppert Foundation.

"I am grateful for the pride our generous alumni and friends show in our University and in helping Avila move forward," Slepitzka said. "This is terrific news and paves the way to continue what has been an unprecedented period of renovation and expansion at Avila. The campus already has undergone more physical additions to campus in the last five years – including new residence halls, dining halls, athletics fields and a pavilion – than it did in the previous 50. With the completion of these projects in August, Avila further positions itself as a beacon of higher education in the Kansas City area and region and as we approach our centennial in 2016." 

## Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D. Science & Health Complex



## Learning Commons



## Pavilion Parking Lot







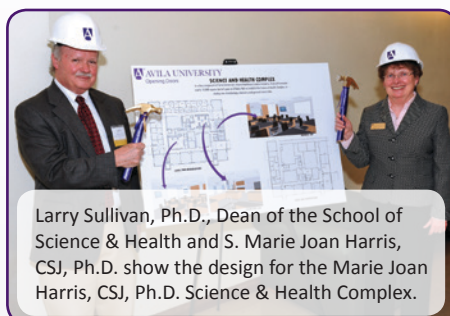
## Gold Hammers at the Ready!

From L to R: Suzanne Slepitzka, Avila First Lady, Sue Fahey, Centennial Campaign Co-Chair, Dave Frantze '76, Centennial Campaign Co-Chair and Trustee, Ernie Straub, Steve Dunn, Centennial Campaign Co-Chair and Trustee, Tom Fritzlen, M.D., Mark Thompson, Centennial Campaign Co-Chair and Trustee, Amy Thompson, Centennial Campaign Co-Chair, Ronald Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA, Sue King, Ph.D., Jim Willcox, Centennial Campaign Honorary Chair, Councilman Scott Taylor, S. Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D., Paul Bookmeyer, S. Patty Clune, Trustee, Joseph Fahey, Centennial Campaign Co-Chair and Trustee and Robert Hunter, Board Chair.

## Breaking through to a bright future



Councilman Scott Taylor and President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA discuss the renovations.



Larry Sullivan, Ph.D., Dean of the School of Science & Health and S. Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D. show the design for the Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D. Science & Health Complex.



Hard hats were donned, hammers swung and plaster flew on March 31 in what will soon become the Learning Commons on the Avila University campus.

The occasion was a "Breakthrough" ceremony celebrating the start of three major capital improvement projects – a Learning Commons, the Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D. Science & Health Complex and a 130-space parking lot. It was a lively celebration that included moving speeches from President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA, S. Marie, and Avila Board of Trustees Bob Hunter and Joe Fahey, and culminated in more than two dozen people taking turns swinging gold hammers and knocking through an existing wall of the old library.

It was a clear signal of the University moving into a bright and exciting future with the most cutting-edge and up-to-date learning and environment for its students. Hunter, chair of the Board of Trustees, put it best: "A breakthrough is a success that leads to greater success." 📍



Patricia Daly Lyon '00 and Centennial Campaign Co-Chairs Amy Thompson, Dave Frantze '76, Mark Thompson and Steve Dunn give a champagne toast to meeting the Mabree Foundation challenge.



# Award Season at Avila University

## *Congratulations to All!*



**Ron Slepitza, Ph.D., CSJA**, Avila President, is being honored as one of the 2014 Generosity of Joseph Honorees by the Sisters of St. Joseph as someone who "enables others to continue the mission of Jesus." He will be honored at the 8th Annual Generosity of St. Joseph Honors Gala April 25 at the Carondelet Motherhouse in St. Louis.



**S. Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D.**, Avila provost and vice president for academic affairs, has been recognized as a Kansas City Icon of Education by *Ingram's* magazine. She was featured in the *Ingram's* February issue.



**Angie Heer**, vice president for advancement and external relations, was named to the 2014 Class of Influential Women by *KC Business* magazine. She was recognized in the March issue of the magazine.



**Kaitlin Gould**, senior theatre student, was accepted into the prestigious London School of Acting, better known as "East 15." Gould was one of 12 students globally to be accepted into the school's 2014 entry class into the master of fine arts program. She begins the two-year residency in September.



Alexzis Thomson, Susan Lawlor, Sean Allen bringing home the Gold at the KC ADDY Awards.

## Gold rush!

### *Students bring home ADDYs*

Students in Avila University's School of Visual and Communication Arts recently attended the American Advertising Federation Kansas City ADDY Awards ceremony and returned to the University with more than they had when they left. A lot more.

Sean Allen, a senior graphic design major from Independence, Mo., won a Gold Award for his *Landfall Navigation* brochure, a project under the supervision of Professor Susan Lawlor. He also took home a Silver Award for *Notes from Home*, under the supervision of Professor Eric Winter.

Alexzis Thomson, a senior graphic design major from Harrisonville, Mo., won two Gold Awards - for her promotion and advertising for a blood drive called the Blood Ball, also overseen by Winter, and her work for *Horticulture Magazine*, under the supervision of Lawlor. Most impressive was that Thomson's *Blood Ball* was named Best of Show in the student category.



## Education professor receives national honor

An adjunct professor in Avila University's School of Education recently was honored as one of America's best elementary school principals.

Vincent M. Cascone, Ph.D., principal at Visitation Catholic School in Kansas City, Mo., was among 61 outstanding elementary and middle school principals from across the U.S. and abroad to be named as 2013 National Distinguished Principals by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP).

Cascone became an adjunct in the School of Education earlier this year.

"As a principal on a personal and professional quest for excellence, Dr. Cascone was very willing to bring his expertise to the university classroom to support the growth of teachers in training," said Karen Garber-Miller, Ph.D., dean of the School of Education. "He believes strongly in holistic approaches to educating children and involving families and communities in that journey. His professional philosophy and practices mirror and extend the mission of Avila University's School of Education – educating innovative, adaptable and involved professionals who will provide service to a diverse and ever-changing population."

Cascone and his colleagues were honored at an awards banquet in Washington D.C.

Established in 1984, the program recognizes public and private school principals who make superior contributions to their schools and communities. The distinguished principals are selected by NAESP state affiliates and by committees representing private and overseas schools.

"Only a principal can move a school from good to great, simultaneously championing children and uplifting the communities they serve," said NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly in a release. "We congratulate this class of NDPs for their steadfast dedication to educating our nation's children to their fullest potential." 🏆







## *The Social Entrepreneur*

*'04 business alum has taken his philanthropy global...  
with a little help from a former U.S. president*

**A**s an active, outgoing boy growing up in small-town middle America, Ahmad Ashkar '04 never felt different from any of his peers. While it's true the Ashkar family, which included his parents and four siblings, was one of just two Arab families living in Leavenworth, Kan. at the time, Ahmad felt as though his was "just another family."





Ashkar appears with former U.S. President Bill Clinton (L) in 2013, and Avila President Ron Slepitz, Ph.D., CSJA during his recent visit to Avila.

Still, there was a quality that existed in the Ashkar family that left a deep and lasting effect on young Ahmad. His father, Adnan, a well-established obstetrician/gynecologist in his native Palestine, uprooted himself and wife Amal and moved to America with the hopes and dreams of making a better life. It's that spirit of ambition, of starting over and making lives better for themselves and others, that obviously passed down to Ahmad, who was the second youngest in the family.

"Throughout my life story," Ashkar said, "I've always been attracted to start-ups."

Ashkar has taken his love of start-ups and entrepreneurship to levels he only dreamed of as that young boy in Leavenworth, or the star student-athlete he became at Avila University. In 2010, he founded the Hult Prize, a non-profit organization dedicated to launching the world's next wave of social entrepreneurs. His vision is to "crowdsource" solutions to global problems by giving college students the opportunity and incentive to invent solutions in a competitive format. Every year, teams from universities and colleges around the world compete to solve the planet's biggest challenges with innovative ideas for sustainable start-up enterprises. The winners receive \$1 million in seed funding to put their ideas and new company to work.

Ashkar credits the realization of his vision to a man who has become a dear friend and mentor, billionaire Bertil Hult, the founder and chairman of the world's largest private education company, EF Education First and namesake of the Hult International Business School - which is where Ashkar earned his master's in business administration in 2010.

"I came up with the idea of bringing the world's business people together to help solve the world's social problems while listening to a speech he gave during my MBA program," Ashkar said. "Entrepreneurship that focused on bringing innovative products and services to the world's poorest – social entrepreneurship."

"If charities operated like a business, it would drive down costs. We promote social business. If you could make a profit helping the poor, why try making a profit doing something else?"

Ashkar's project eventually drew some rather famous attention. Former President Bill Clinton took notice and his Clinton

Global Initiative, a project of the Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation, has now partnered with the Hult Prize. President Clinton is actively involved in the Hult Prize, personally selecting the challenge that is pushed out to tens of thousands of business students around the world. President Clinton also awards the Hult Prize to the winning start-up each year at the grand finals of the annual competition, which is hosted by Clinton himself on the opening night of the Clinton Global Initiative annual meeting in New York.

Today, the Hult Prize is in its fifth year and has 23 full-time employees and about 500 volunteers operating across six major international cities including Boston, San Francisco, London, Dubai, Shanghai and Sao Paulo, Brazil. Recently TIME Magazine named it as one of the top five ideas changing the world.

As a first-generation American, the only football Ashkar grew up loving involved kicking a round ball into a netted goal. That is, until he reached eighth grade and fully discovered the U.S. version of football.

"I didn't have much choice really," he said. "I wanted to do the cool thing."

What was surprising was how quickly young Ahmad took to the game. He was deceptively fast – clocking 4.39 seconds for the 40-yard dash. He started as a freshman on Immaculata High School's scout team, but in an early scrimmage, returned three kickoffs for touchdowns against varsity players. He started from then on and by his senior year was named the Kansas Class 3A state player of the year.

His high school exploits received attention from some of the top collegiate programs in the country, and he eventually signed with the University of Nebraska Cornhuskers. But, after a season, he found playing opportunities scarce and transferred to East Tennessee State.

After a season there, his mother became ill, and Ashkar decided to find a place where he could play football and go to school closer to home. The coach who recruited him the hardest when he was running over high school competition at Immaculata was a man named Craig Schuler, who then was on the coaching staff at Benedictine College in nearby Atchison, Kan. Schuler had moved to become offensive coordinator at Avila, which had just started a varsity football program.



### ***Recalling their Eagles glory days***

Ashkar and former Eagles football teammate Kevin Furderer '05 tour the many updates to Avila's campus, including the renovated Thomas R. Zarda Family Athletic Complex.



Ashkar quickly established himself as a star running back at Avila, part of a backfield – along with teammate Kevin Furderer '05 - nicknamed "Thunder and Lightning." Ashkar was Thunder, and in his second season, 2002, the Eagles finished an all-time best 5-5, and he was named first-team all-conference and NAIA All-American.

"Our opening game, we beat William Jewell for the first time, which was especially sweet because our (head) coach, Tim Johnson, played there," Ashkar said. "We also beat MidAmerica Nazarene, which was one of the top-ranked teams in the nation at the time. And, we played in the Wheat Bowl to start that next year."

Ashkar also became very involved off the field at Avila. While he officially lived at home in Leavenworth, he often bunked for a night or two during the week in Furderer's dorm room or the room of another teammate. He also dove into his studies as a finance and business administration major. He said Avila was very similar to Immaculata in that there seemed to be a community of support for all endeavors.

*"Throughout my life story, I've always been attracted to start-ups."*





"There was a real sense of community," he said. "And, there was great local integration with the adjunct professor. I'm still in touch today with a few of them."

"I enjoyed my time at Avila immensely."

One of the professors Ashkar remains in touch with, A.J. Lutz, remembers Ashkar as a confident young man who related well to everyone he came in contact with.

"Ahmad had the ability to have a conversation with someone 20 years older than him and hold his own," said Lutz, an adjunct in Avila's School of Business. "You don't see that quality in a lot of 21-year-old college students. He was a good student who also had exceptional people skills as well as a great sense of humor."

"I remember thinking that this guy can do whatever he wants in life. He was very likeable and talented."

Lutz especially remembered he and his wife running into Ashkar one night at a restaurant.

"My wife spoke to him for a few minutes, and I think she wanted to adopt him," he said. "He was really that good with people."

After graduation, Ashkar embarked on a career as a capital investment officer, particularly with investors in Middle Eastern countries where he used his Arab heritage and people skills to place nearly \$1 billion. It was through his contacts there that he became familiar with the Hult International Business School. He enrolled in the school's MBA program and during his time there traveled to Boston, London, Shanghai and Dubai. He studied with students from 120 countries.

"My experience at the Hult International Business School was life-changing," he said.

Ashkar was about to find just how life-changing. While at Hult, he developed an idea of running a charity like a business. Rather than a linear distribution system where it costs \$5 to feed the first person as well as the 50th person, a business model would take into consideration economies of scale so that the cost of feeding the second person is less and less until feeding a person down the line would cost nothing and ultimately make a profit.

Ashkar's ideas caught the attention of Bertil Hult, the Swedish billionaire who founded EF Education First, the world's largest for-profit education company. Ashkar was stunned one day when he picked up the phone, and Hult was on the other line.

"He said he was sending his private jet for me and pack a couple day's clothes," Ashkar said. "I had no idea where I was going, or what was going to happen."

At the end of the couple days, Ashkar had his seed money for the Hult Prize.

**I**n 2005, President Clinton established the Clinton Global Initiative to convene global leaders in an effort to implement innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. Partnering with Ashkar and his Hult Prize seemed like a natural fit and before long, Ashkar found himself in direct contact with the 42nd U.S. president, as well as members of his family including former First Lady, U.S. Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, about four times a year.

"It's been surreal," Ashkar said. "If I was to say 10 years ago that I'd meet and be working with the Clintons, I'd think I was crazy. But, the reality is, once you get to that place, we're all still



Representatives from McGill University's Aspire Food Group celebrate the 2013 Hult Prize.

looking forward to the next big thing. These people are humans. They have opinions, but they also have a lot of power."

President Clinton not only awards the \$1 million prize to the Hult winners each year, he also selects annually a topic for which the collegiate teams compete.

"The Hult Prize is a wonderful example of the creative cooperation we need to build a world with shared opportunities, shared responsibilities and shared prosperity," President Clinton said in a recent YouTube video. "I always look forward to seeing the many outstanding ideas the challenge produces."

One of the most radical start-ups, Ashkar said, was presented this last September and was the Year 4 winner. The project was designed to eliminate food insecurity around the world by using insects as a food source. It's called Aspire Food Group, and the United Nations has recognized it as a viable initiative.

"We might have the solution to preemptive cancer detection," Ashkar said. "The ability to pool these resources onto one platform ... Words can't describe it."

"In places that we touch, we're there. Now, the challenge is to get even more local, to places we haven't considered, get to more universities and inspire more youth from around the world to re-think their life purpose and help them fulfill their own pursuit of impact. This is viral."

Ashkar said it's possible that one day Avila will field a team that competes for the Hult Prize. Before that, however, he is getting ready to launch a high school version of the Prize, which would create a similar platform for high school students. He wants the program to drive awareness of common age-specific problems such as cyber bullying and teen abuse.

It's all enough to keep Ashkar on his toes for the foreseeable future. He said he travels 250 days a year, often taking himself far away from his home in Virginia and away from his wife Tanya and three young children, Adnan (6), Layan (2) and Adam (1).

He believes it's all worth it.

"Changing the world is not easy," he said. 🐼



## University partners with

### *Cerner associates earn graduate certificate in instructional design & technology*

**A**vila University has partnered with one of the Kansas City area's most prominent, respected and fastest-growing corporations to form a unique program whereby associates can further their educations in a convenient way – on their job site – while maintaining full-time work schedules.

Avila has infused its graduate certificate program in instructional design and technology with 20 students at Cerner Corporation, the Kansas City-based firm known throughout the world as one of the foremost purveyors of health-care solutions. The company is covering tuition for the students, all of whom are Cerner "learning consultants."


Robert Campbell, vice president and chief learning officer at Cerner, said Avila was a perfect partner for Cerner in this project because of the University's

willingness to work with Cerner's unique business environment.

"Avila's flexibility in adapting to our needs, including their approach to onsite delivery and customized material, were absolutely key," Campbell said. "They were able to step out of the traditional education institution mindset and approach us as a real partner who understands our business."

The learning consultants come from all over the world, some from as far as Canada, Great Britain and Australia.

"The Avila program uses a competency-based learning approach," said Mark Eaton, Ph.D., who facilitates the course with colleague Andria Stokes, Ed.D. "Students use Cerner real-world projects as case studies. Through various deliverables and ePortfolios, we assess their competencies based on the International Board of Standards for Training, Performance and Instruction."

Students can take the 13 hours earned for the graduate certificate and easily roll them into a master of arts in management degree, if they choose. 



# Keeping America safe

*Recent alum, veteran appointed as prestigious Presidential Management Fellow*

It's been just two years since Larry Hayes '11, '12 walked across the stage and accepted his master's diploma in business administration from Avila University and, already, he's working at very high levels for the U.S. government.

Hayes, who earned his bachelor's in business administration – with minors in psychology, pre law and political science – from Avila in 2011 and his MBA in 2012, is working as an immigration services officer for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). His role is mainly to screen immigrant applicants for U.S. citizenship ... to make certain they don't pose any security threats to America. He said he also works on the qualification process and eligibility of work permits for documented immigrants.

He has attended naturalization swearing-in ceremonies for new U.S. citizens in Dallas and Kansas City, Mo.

"It's a very rigorous process these immigrants must go through," said Hayes, who served with the U.S. Marine Corps from 1984-86. "But, there is no shortage of people applying for benefits (such as work and student visas) and citizenship.

"When anyone comes into this country lawfully, they come through USCIS."

Hayes said one of the things that is examined when an individual enters the U.S. is, were they good citizens in their home country?

"If they qualify for the benefit, they get the benefit," he said. "If not, they don't. The system is built to identify potential threatening people. You can't control an entire border, but you can take people coming in and make sure they're qualified to receive benefits."

If the process for obtaining citizenship is difficult and complex, it's no more rigorous than the process Hayes went through to land his current position. Graduation was followed by months of a stringent vetting process. He applied to the Presidential Management Fellows program (PMF), a prestigious two-year paid government fellowship sponsored by the Office of Personnel Management for recent graduate students who seek a two-year fellowship in a U.S. government agency.

Out of 12,000 applicants, Hayes was one of only 660 who made the final cut.

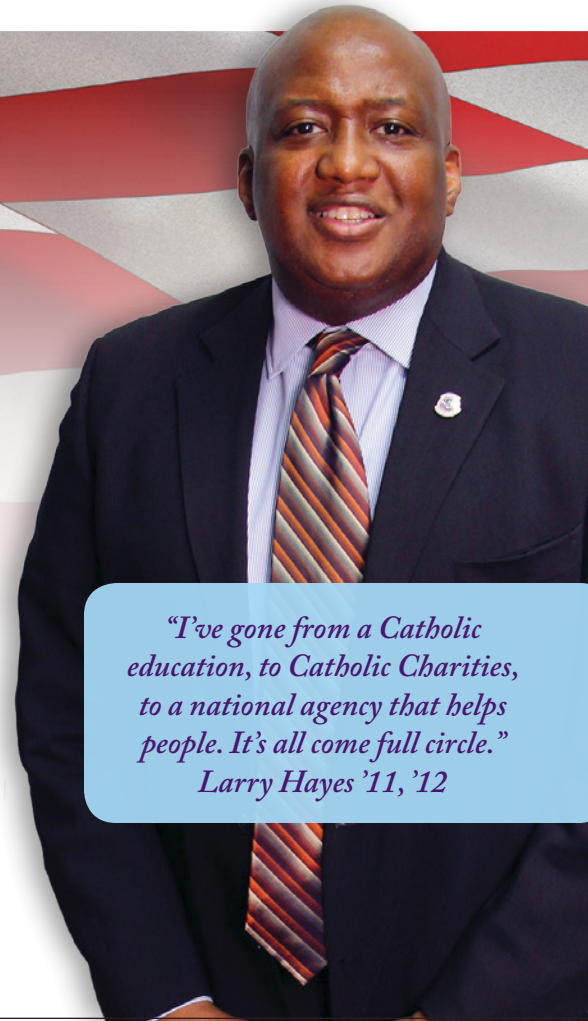
"I was in Miami ... doing assessments with students from throughout the country," Hayes said. "It was an all-day process of testing, with six different interview sessions and six different scenarios. They want to find out if you can play well in the sand box with others. They want government agencies to work together better."

Hayes recently received his appointment to the Jacksonville, Fla. office of the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Division of Community Planning & Development.

Hayes said his education at Avila prepared him perfectly for his work with the USCIS and HUD.

"I've gone from a Catholic education, to Catholic Charities, to a national agency that helps people. It's all come full circle." 🇺🇸

*"I've gone from a Catholic education, to Catholic Charities, to a national agency that helps people. It's all come full circle."  
Larry Hayes '11, '12*



# Earning the Children's Trust

Assistant professor of psychology Regina Staves, Ph.D., was awarded the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) Chair Award. The award recognized Staves' service on the organization's board of directors and also for her work in prevention.

"Gina fully embodies all of the characteristics that this award stands for – dedication, commitment and service," outgoing chair Tom Vansaghi, Ph.D., said in an article posted on the CTF website. "She is a consistent positive voice and supportive advocate for Missouri's children, as well as for those who work on behalf of Missouri's kids. She continues to be a personal source of inspiration, encouragement and motivation to CTF staff, board members and other child advocates."

Staves said, "The Children's Trust Fund staff and board consistently lead efforts to help prevent child abuse and neglect in Missouri, which is something I think we all should do our part to assure happens."

Before beginning to teach at Avila University in 2004, Staves worked in private practice specializing in attachment, stress, psychological trauma, abuse, neglect and childhood behavioral problems. She served as CTF chair for two years and has worked on many of the organization's initiatives and projects. She also worked with the National Alliance of Children's Trust & Prevention Funds on its publication, Preventing Child Neglect & Promoting Child Well Being.

"We are deeply grateful to Dr. Staves for her ongoing support, commitment and leadership with moving CTF forward and for sharing our vision of Strong Families, Safe Kids," Executive Director Kirk Schreiber said on the CTF website. 🙏



CTF Chair Award recipient Regina Staves, Ph.D. (C), pictured with CTF Executive Director Kirk Schreiber (L) and CTF Outgoing Chair Tom Vansaghi, Ph.D. (R)



# Son's question provides veteran couple the answer: *"Avila University's Advantage program"*

Johanna and Brandon Howard were in their mid-30s when they were hit with what they call their "a-ha moment."

The couple's oldest child, Jordan, was whizzing through high school with sky-high marks and, though he was just in his freshman year, already was thinking about college. Or, at least, his parents were thinking about it for him, which is when Jordan dropped a little nugget of wisdom that went something like this:

"Neither of you went to college," Jordan asked Johanna and Brandon. "Why should I?"

It's not as though Johanna and Brandon were slackers. Quite the opposite, in fact. Both joined the U.S. Marine Corps after graduating from high school and worked hard every day juggling military service, civilian jobs and raising five children.

Still, something in Jordan's question stuck with the couple.

"We decided we wanted to set the example," Johanna said.

Last January, Johanna and Brandon, both 36, full-time working parents of five children, started college. They enrolled in Avila University's Advantage program, seeking bachelor of science degrees in business administration.

While the Howards said location and logistics were a big reason in why they chose Avila — their home and places of work all are within a few miles of the University — they also pointed to the counsel they received from Admissions Advisor Rachel Robinson as being instrumental in getting them started.

"Rachel in the Advantage office was fantastic," Johanna said. "She made us feel really comfortable and confident that we could do this."

Brandon said Avila also received a strong recommendation from one of his veteran buddies, Mike Sanchez, who's working on his teaching certification through Advantage.

"What's also great about the Advantage program is that you're in with people your own age," Brandon said.

Both Howards, who originally met during their first military assignments in Camp Johnson, N.C., are paying their tuition through the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

"My first day of class ... I hadn't been in class in 18 years, and I was nervous," Brandon said. "Not nervous, really, but scared. I contemplated not going. But the instructors were great. They take the time to explain everything."

Johanna added, "Even our online instructors give us their email addresses and are glad to help any time."

Johanna even said she recently signed up to mentor others in Advantage's new Mentoring Project because "I wanted to make sure others had the same help we received."

The Howards are scheduled to graduate in May 2015.

Both said they'd someday like to assume their managers' positions at their current places of employment. Brandon said he has even bigger plans.

"I want to someday own a restaurant," he said. "I've already learned a lot I didn't know about running a business."

And, what about Jordan, the son whose question started all this? Now a sophomore at Belton High School, he's already taking three college-level courses and, next year, will take courses at Northwest Missouri State University.

"You always have time to go to school," Johanna said. "We're both full-time students, we have five children and work full-time. You just have to make that time for something so important." 📖



*"We decided we wanted to set the example."  
Johanna Howard*

## Avila Welcomes Veterans

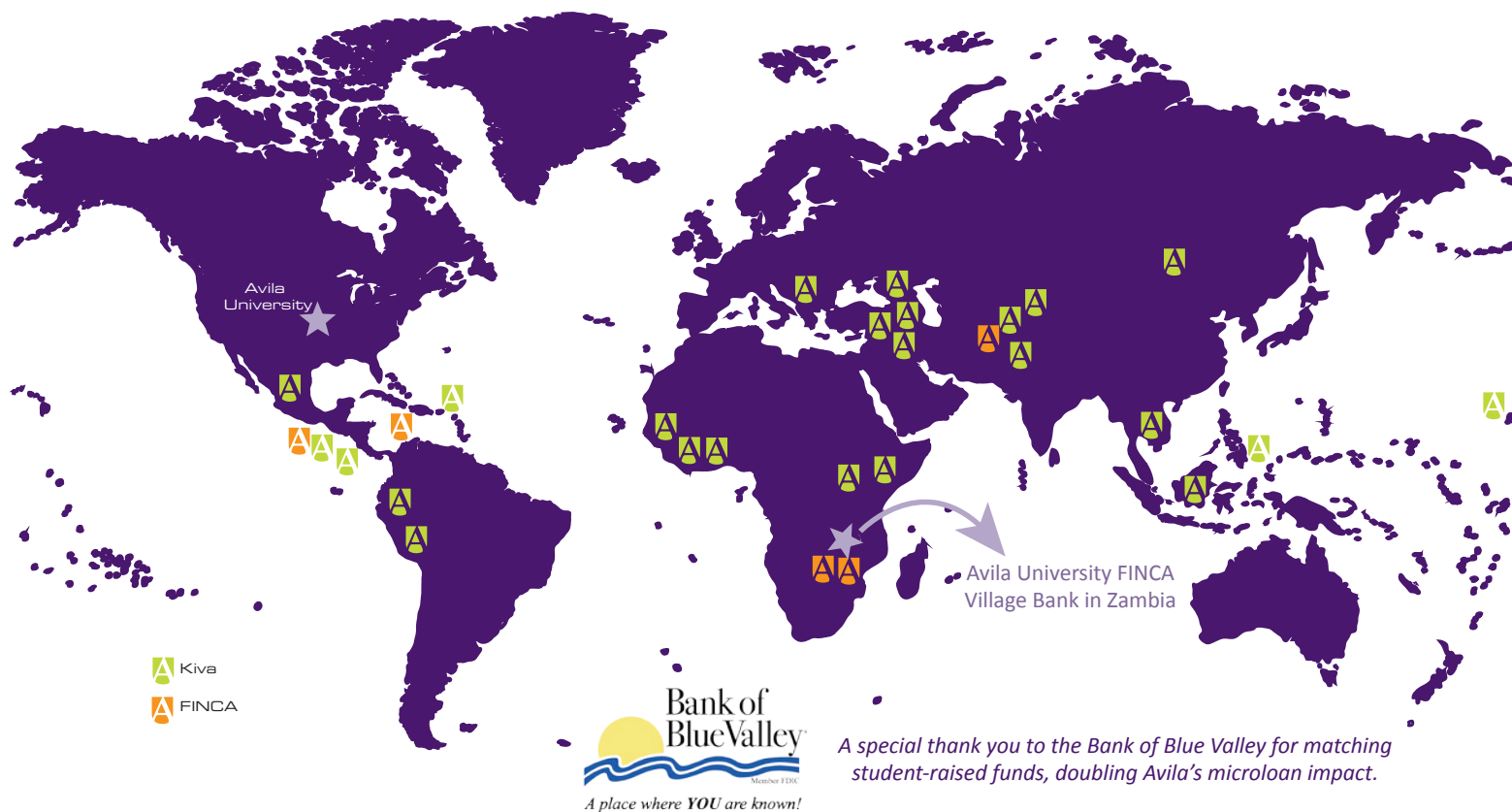
As an education partner in the Yellow Ribbon program, a provision of the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act, Avila works with the Veterans Administration to fund tuition expenses for veterans and their families up to 100 percent.

**That means qualified veterans or their family members can attend Avila for free!**

Learn more at  
**[www.avila.edu/  
welcomeveterans](http://www.avila.edu/welcomeveterans)**  
**[veterans@avila.edu](mailto:veterans@avila.edu)**



# First-Year students open International Bank of Avila



At the beginning of the school year, first-year students were assigned to read *The International Bank of Bob* by Bob Harris for their First-Year Seminar class. The book details how individuals make microloans to help others all over the world. Harris described how both Kiva and FINCA allow people to loan small amounts of money to impoverished people to fulfill basic wants or needs or to expand small business, send children to school, or buy a cow to provide food to their families.

In September, Harris was the featured speaker at Avila's Harry S. Truman Distinguished Lecture Series. He told stories of how his microloans turned into world-wide adventures. He brought to life the idea that these small loans were making a world of difference when he actually met the people he had been funding from thousands of miles away.

After Harris' speech, students sold T-shirts to raise money to begin making

their own microloans. A total of \$5,225 was contributed for 198 microfinance loans to 59 people in 29 countries, plus \$4,000 in contributions to FINCA to establish a village bank in Zambia, an extremely poor country in Africa, in the name of Avila University.

Students talked about not only who they made loans to, but also explained how the experience affected them and their ideas about the difference between

loaning and charity. Students explained how Avila's mission of helping the dear neighbor blazed the way of their efforts. Throughout each student's presentation, there was a reoccurring theme - personal connections. Many students chose to loan money to people with which they felt a personal connection. Some said the idea of a single mother or family with many children made them think of home and how they in a small way could relate to these people.

Most of the students' loans went to Zambia. As of today, a few loans have been repaid, and the credit Avila received from FINCA has been reinvested into other microloans around the world. As many students expressed, even something they considered to be a small step toward creating a better life for others might actually be a large ripple effect felt around the world. 🌍



*Helping our dear neighbors across the world!*



loans that change lives

Armenia	Mexico
Cambodia	Mongolia
Ecuador	Nicaragua
El Salvador	Pakistan
Georgia	Peru
Indonesia	Philippines
Jordan	Samoa
Kenya	Sierra Leone
Kosovo	Tajikistan
Kyrgyzstan	Togo
Lebanon	Uganda
Liberia	USA



FINCA®

Afghanistan	Malawi
El Salvador	Zambia
Haiti	



Inspired by her participation in Avila's microloan project, **Caitlin Vogler** created this original artwork to be featured in a student-authored book of reflections.



**Caitlin Vogler**

"This experience overall has been a huge eye-opener for me, and I know it has been for others also."



**Abigail Calva**

"Perhaps the most important thing that I learned was that no matter how far away people live, what language they speak, or what religion they practice, they are people who share the same hopes and dreams as we do."



**James Bradish**

"If more people lived by 'you love more, you win' (Harris, 2013, p. 327), I imagine the world would be exponentially better."



**Makenzie Martin**

"This entire project connects with the Avila values, as it focuses on doing a service for others."

## *Kickin' it with Kiva*

### *Dean and student travel to San Francisco for conference*

Last semester, Darby Gough, Avila's dean of students and student development, and Kara Koehler, a secondary education student, traveled to San Francisco and attended the first-ever conference for Kiva, the world's preeminent micro-lending platform. Once Kiva ascertained that schools and universities all over the U.S. teach their students about microloans, it came up with the idea of a small Kiva conference that would include key speakers as well as provide the schools with pre-made lesson plans that would further educate future students. Kiva sent out invitations to many large universities, but accepted requests from a large number of elementary, middle and high school teachers as well. Bob Harris, author of *The International Bank of Bob*, who has worked extensively with Kiva in making his own microloans around the world, specifically recommended the organization invite Avila because of the work he'd seen the University doing during his visit and lecture here in September.

Gough and Koehler said that being able to listen to each of the speakers' unique stories was an awesome experience.

"The best part was being able to make connections and network," said Koehler, referring not only to students she roomed with, but also people she met during the different activities and lectures she attended each of the four days.

Making the trip to the Kiva conference fortified the experience Gough and Koehler had in reading *The International Bank of Bob* and making Kiva microloans themselves. Not only did they have the opportunity to fulfill the mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet by helping the dear neighbor, they also were inspired to more good work in the future.

Both Gough and Koehler agreed the trip was an amazing experience for them and Avila University. 🌱



Kara Koehler (L), student, and Darby Gough (R), dean of students, traveled to San Francisco and attended a national Kiva convention to learn more about the world of microfinance.





# Hooray for Hollywood

*Communications alum realizes his dream*

Growing up in Harlem, N.Y. and later in Kansas City, Mo., Theophilus Clark '04 said there only were three things he ever wanted to do – play basketball in the NBA, be a millionaire and be on TV.

While that first dream – to become a professional basketball player – has probably come and gone, wish No. 3 recently came true which ultimately could lead to the fulfillment of wish No. 2.

Clark, who graduated from Avila University with a degree in communications, earned a co-starring role in an episode of the hit TV series NCIS: Los Angeles, acting alongside stars LL Cool J and Chris O'Donnell. The episode aired in March, and he already has been told his charac-

ter will be coming back for at least one more episode.

"It was my first speaking role on TV, and it was quite an experience," Clark said. "I had to go through two auditions for two speaking lines. But I just love acting. It was a lot of fun."

Clark's other love, basketball, and the dreams that came with it, never came to fruition. It was the offer of a basketball scholarship that brought Clark to Avila and, although he never made it to the NBA, he left Avila with much more.

"My experience at Avila was really about the friends I made," he said. "It was my first time being thrust into that diverse of a population. It helped me become more cultured, well-rounded. And, in retrospect, I definitely liked the personal connections you made with professors. They really cared about the students."

A serious knee injury during his second season severely slowed his progression

as a player and, for perhaps the first time, he was forced to reflect more practically on his future.

"That second year when I hurt my knee, I shifted my mind's focus to the fact that I wasn't invincible and needed to start taking my classes more seriously," he said. He received his bachelor's in communications in 2004, when he was 20.

Clark entered the 9-to-5 world, first working at UMB Bank before moving into real estate. But it wasn't long before he realized that wasn't going to satisfy him.

"Around 2008 when the real estate bubble burst, I started planning my next move," he said. "I knew I didn't want to go back to corporate America. I wanted to do something that didn't feel like work, but paid me to do it."

Clark hired an acting coach and quickly landed some local commercials – Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Rob Sight Ford were two of the more popular ones. That success made him know he wanted to be an actor, and he knew there was only one place to go. In May, 2011, he packed up and moved to Los Angeles.

"People gave me funny looks in Kansas City when I said I was going to LA to act," he said, laughing yet again. "That never affected me. I had the utmost confidence."

Clark said he's careful with his money and does enough commercial work to support him between larger projects like NCIS: Los Angeles.

"I feel there are two choices in life," he said. "I was going the secure route to get my million at first. But I decided I would rather endure financial uncertainty than sacrifice my freedom. I enjoy acting and have the potential to make the kind of money I want to make." 📺



Clark and NCIS: Los Angeles star, LL Cool J.



# London calling

*Theatre student one of only 12 accepted into world famous acting school*

**K**aitlin Gould can lean back and have a good laugh now when considering that, not that long ago, she didn't really think she wanted to go to graduate school.

She loved to act for as long as she could remember. As a young girl growing up in Overland Park, Kan., she said she watched *West Side Story* "1,000 times on repeat," dreaming of being like Natalie Wood in the role of Maria. But, she didn't consider herself an "academic person" and figured that, once she graduated with her bachelor of fine arts from Avila University in May, she'd be ready to tackle some local roles and begin her career without furthering her education.

What is it that's said about best-laid plans?

Turns out Gould, a senior, will be attending graduate school after all. In mid-February, she learned that she was one of 12 students globally to be accepted into the fall 2014 class of the master of fine arts program at the esteemed London School of Acting, better known in England as East 15. The program is part of the University of Essex and one of the most competitive and selective programs in the world. First-year master's acting students are placed in London professional theatres in addition to their coursework, and second-year students have a professional acting residency at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London. There also are residency opportunities in Moscow or Bali and summer professional acting internships in New York City and Los Angeles.

"It's all been just kind of surreal," said Gould, in the midst of final preparations for her lead role in Avila's production of *August: Osage County*. "Acting in London is a big deal. It's amazing to get this opportunity."

Auditions in the U.S. were held over four consecutive days in early February by the University Resident Theatre Association, a consortium of 40 top-tier theatre graduate schools. Thousands of young actors descended on San Francisco, New York City and, in Gould's case, Chicago. After an 8 a.m. orientation, students were given two minutes to audition with two one-minute monologue readings, one contemporary and one classic.

She received a call-back from the university she wanted most. She'll begin her two-year residency in September.

"Kaitlin Gould represents the strongest of our student population, having invested time and energy as a performer in all areas



of our program," said Amity Bryson, DMA, associate professor of music and chair of the Department of Music, who taught Gould in vocal music.

Robert Foulk, director of performance studies, associate professor of theatre and Gould's director for *August: Osage County*, said, "Kaitlin's acceptance to The London School graduate program ... is an example of how the Avila University theatre program prepares students for their future.

"We're all very proud of her." 📺







## Called to service

### *New society appeals to students called to mission of CSJs*

**A**vila University students looking to get closer to the mission of the founding Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet now have an avenue to do so.

It's called the 1650 Society because that was the year the Sisters signed their charter and, according to Dave Armstrong, Avila's


director of mission effectiveness and campus ministries, it was "created to introduce students who have a particular calling to the charism of

the Sisters – to loving unity between God and the dear neighbor."

Armstrong said about 20 students showed interest in the society, and 12 are in its first "class." Members of the 1650 Society will undergo 10 months of sessions focused on the history and the spirituality and act of living the

charism of the Sisters, be it with family, friends or the Avila community.

"Basically, it's a precursor to the Sisters of St. Joseph Associates, or CSJA program," Armstrong said. "This is just a program where students can foster their connection to the Sisters."

Students in the 1650 Society started meeting in January and will meet through October. The first class will be officially inducted during the Feast of St. Teresa of Avila on the Sisters' Founder's Day. 

## New archives would make S. Martha proud


**S**Martha Smith, CSJ, '49 entered religious life in 1947 and taught history at what is now Avila University for 30 years, from 1965-95. Two years after retiring from teaching, as professor emerita, she began work on the Women Religious Special Collection housed in Hooley-Bundschu Library on the Avila campus.

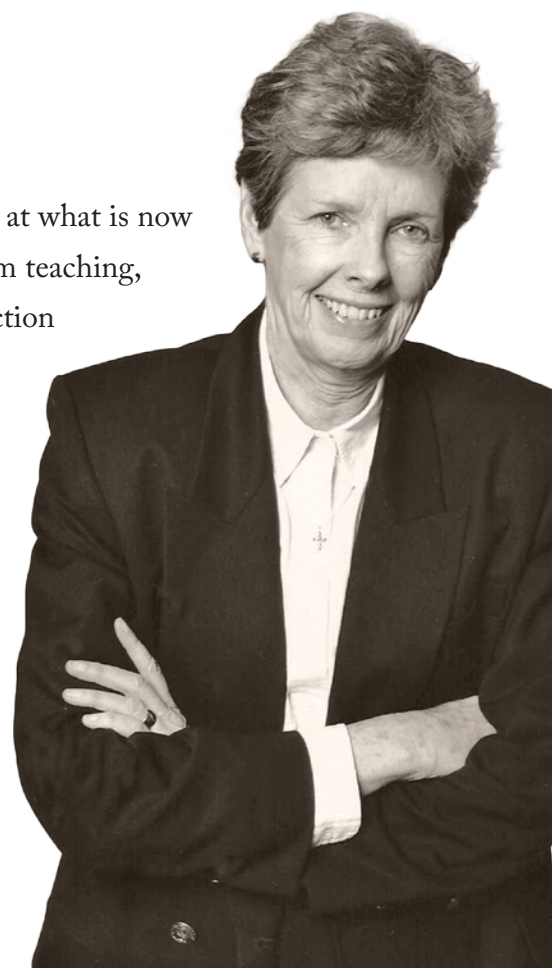
It's fitting that a space in Avila's new Learning Commons - targeted to be open in the fall of 2014 and housing these and other historical documents - will be named the **Martha Smith, CSJ Archives and Research Center**.

"We started collecting materials by, for and about Catholic sisters in the U.S. and worked on it for as long as she could," said Carol Coburn, Ph.D., professor in religious studies and women's studies, who co-authored a prize-winning book with Smith entitled, *Spirited Lives: How Nuns Shaped Catholic Culture and American Life, 1836-1920*.

Smith was a lifelong Kansas Citian who attended St. Teresa's Academy and the College of St. Teresa. She died in 2011.

The archive space which will bear her name will include the Women Religious Special Collection, which Smith and Coburn started together in 1997, the U.S. Federation of the

Sisters of St. Joseph materials and Avila University archives. It will include newspapers, legal documents, photos, periodicals, yearbooks and more that will make it a unique collection in the U.S. and promises to be a capstone contribution fitting with the mission and values of Avila. 





# United Nations bound

## *Parsons to attend UN-CSJ meeting*

The chances are highly likely that Ken Parsons, Ph.D., will stand out when he attends an important meeting in New York City at the end of April.

Parsons, director for the Center of Global Studies & Social Justice at Avila University, will be a guest of the Justice & Peace International Commission which is part of the Sisters of St. Joseph (CSJ) non-governmental organization at the United Nations. They will meet with other representatives of the UN to present a CSJ statement on global peace and justice April 27-May 3 in the Big Apple. According to Parsons, 30-35 sisters from five continents will be present at the meeting.

And, of the CSJ delegation, Parsons will be the only male. In fact, he'll likely be the only non-CSJ.

"I simply want to observe the process," said Parsons, who also teaches courses at Avila in philosophy and religious studies. "I'll be taking notes, observing and assisting."

The meeting is a big deal for the CSJs, because getting an audience with UN delegates isn't easy, Parsons said. The CSJs' non-governmental organization worked many years to reach the point where they could get such a meeting. Likewise, the process Parsons took in becoming part of the CSJ delegation didn't come about easily.

The key moment came when he found himself sitting next to S. Griselda Martinez Morales, CSJ, on a bus ride during an Association of Colleges of the Sisters of St. Joseph conference last June in Philadelphia. S. Griselda, who was one of the keynote speakers – and, who delivered the inaugural address for the Center at Avila last fall – also happened to be leading the delegation to the UN. Parsons asked if he could attend to observe the process, and two weeks later, received an email saying he'd been accepted.


"I just want to study the process and witness the presentation of the final product," Parsons said.

The main thing the CSJs want to accomplish, Parsons said, was to present their statement on justice and peace in one unified voice from a collective authority, not easy when it comes from five continents and many different languages.

"It seems that this is the first global document expressed in a unified voice from the global CSJ community," he said.

Parsons said he also is looking forward to meeting CSJs from South America, particularly Argentina, Bolivia and Peru, where he and two Avila colleagues plan on a site visit in June.

"We want to establish connections to CSJ communities around the world," he said. "Establish relations for future students, staff and faculty at Avila." 📖



*"This is the first global document expressed in a unified voice from the global CSJ community."*  
Ken Parsons





# Partnering in prayer

**W**hen you're away from home for the first time and working hard to excel in a collegiate environment, it's good to know there is someone in your corner – someone to talk to, or someone you simply know is pulling for you, spiritually as well as personally.

That's where Avila University's Prayer Partners come in. Prayer Partners puts together two people – preferably a student with a faculty member – who meet regularly to share prayer, thoughts and personal feelings and reflections about life. "We both get so much out of it," said Haley Baer, a sophomore, who partnered with Carole Hillestad '89, assistant professor of radiologic sciences. "It's definitely a priority for me. I look forward to it."

There is no mentor-student hierarchy in Prayer Partners. Faculty and students are on equal footing. In fact, Baer has never, or probably will never have Hillestad as a professor in one of her classes. That makes it easier for the two to relate to each other during their prayer sessions, which Hillestad said typically last less than half an hour.


"We talk about anything in life that's going on and needs prayer," Baer said. "And, toward the end of our meetings, I always have a Christian song I play on my iPod."

Hillestad said, "We usually end on a prayer that's more a traditional prayer."

"It's nice to know there's somebody else that's going to take prayer needs seriously. I've learned so much from Haley in terms of praying. And, I was never into contemporary Christian rock music that much. Now, I'm so into it. I love it, and I've found it on my satellite radio."

Baer said it's nice for her to know she has a faculty member she can turn to.

"On one of the snow days we recently had ... I'm one of those people who doesn't know how to relax, I'm always thinking I have to be studying or doing something," she said. "Carole emailed me and told me to take a break and relax."

"It holds you accountable, keeps you on track." 





*In Celebration of*  
  
*75 years*


*S. Olive Louise Dallavis*

## It's a Diamond Jubilee for S. Olive

**H**er name is synonymous with Avila University and, in many ways, with higher education in the Kansas City area.

S. Olive Louise Dallavis, CSJ, Ph.D., was a leader in education in the Kansas City community for 56 years, beginning her career at the College of St. Teresa in 1954. She oversaw the move of the college campus to its current location and served as president for 25 years at what became Avila College, now Avila University.

This year, S. Olive celebrates her 75th year as a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet. She was baptized Mary in Nokomis, Ill., entered the order in 1938 and was received into the novice class in 1939.

In honor of her outstanding contributions to Avila and the Kansas City community, the SOLD Fund is named in honor of President Emerita S. Olive Louis Dallavis. Started in 2007, the SOLD Fund supports annual scholarships for Avila students most in need. 

### ***A Time for Celebration***

On March 16, Avila President Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA, delivered a gift basket to S. Olive, who lives at Nazareth Living Center in St. Louis. The gift basket was filled with more than 90 cards from Avila alumni and friends. According to President Slepitzka, S. Olive is doing well and spends much of her time in prayer.





# All-time leading goal scorer now scoring high in med school

Chances are, Danielle Price '12 would have been doing just fine in medical school had she not first attended Avila University. She's an achiever, plain and simple.

Still, Price said she cherishes her time at Avila and knows those years helped prepare her for the next step, which for her was med school at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. She's in her second year and is taking her first set of board certification exams this spring.

Price was at Avila just three years, making her the only pre-health major in

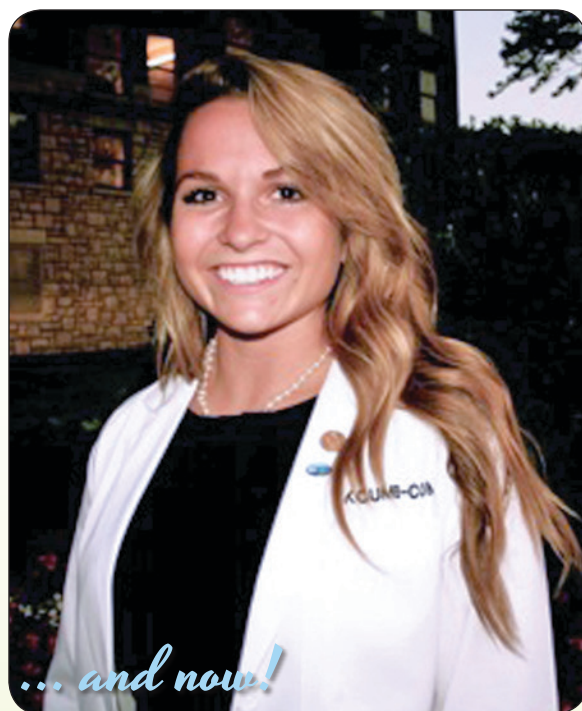
the last five years to earn her degree in just six semesters. On top of that, Price double-majored in pre-health and biology with a minor in chemistry. She graduated with a 4.0 grade-point average, never making lower than an 'A' in any class.

"My time at Avila prepared me well for med school," Price said. "The science program at Avila is really good. What was a big help was that I tutored anatomy and physiology for two years after taking those classes, so I really, really knew the material."

Price worked closely with Greg Fitch, Ph.D., professor and chair of biology, who not only taught Price as a student, but supervised her as a research assistant.

"Danielle was great to have in class – very capable and very interested," Fitch said. "As a student doing work in my lab on insect-laying behavior, she was motivated and innovative. She was and is a confident young woman and fearless academically."

"I worked hard," was about all the modest Price said regarding her academic achievement.



The achievements at Avila weren't limited to the classroom, either. A native of DeSoto, Kan., Price also starred three seasons on the Eagles women's soccer team, and when she graduated, she left as the University's all-time career goals leader.

"My freshman season, Avila had never qualified for the (Heart of America Athletic Conference) tournament," Price said. "I scored the winning goal in the game that got us to the tournament. That was pretty special."

Price credits Larry Sullivan, Ph.D., dean of Avila's School of Science & Health, for helping her graduate within three years, with highest honors.

"It's all worked out well for me," she said. 🏆



## Get your transcripts and more!

Avila's Registration and Students Records Office is here to help you get a copy of your transcripts or an extra copy of your diploma.

Visit their office on the first floor of Blasco Hall or call at 816.501.2410 or go to [avila.edu/registrar](http://avila.edu/registrar) for your official copy needs.



CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

1916-2016

## We want to hear from you!

Avila's Centennial Celebration is coming in 2016 and the plans have begun.

Send your memories, photographs and stories to **Bob Luder**, Public Relations Specialist, via email at [bob.luder@avila.edu](mailto:bob.luder@avila.edu), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/avilauniversity](https://www.facebook.com/avilauniversity) or postal mail us at: Avila University, Office of Marketing and Communications, 11901 Wornall Road, Kansas City, MO 64145. Be sure to include your current address and phone number.

*As Avila's 100-year plans develop, we'll keep you informed, so you can be part of the celebration!*



## *Giving the gift of life*

**T**ori Kopp was much like the other 350 or so who had the insides of their cheeks swabbed in 2012.

It seemed the right thing to do. It was consistent and supportive of the mission of Avila University, where she was then a brand new junior student to the School of Nursing. She also happened to be a member of the Avila Student Nursing Organization and Colleges Against Cancer, which helped sponsor the bone marrow drive inside Marian Center.

But, like most, she really never thought her bone marrow would be matched and she'd receive a phone call.

"I did it mostly out of obligation," said Kopp, now a senior and on course to receive her bachelor's in nursing this May. "Six months later, I got a call telling me I was a match."

Just like that, Kopp's world experienced a seismic jolt. She had a huge decision to make. Was she ready to commit to at least the next three months to tests and basically be on call 24/7 for a bone marrow transplant, or did she carry on with her studies and busy life?

"I made the commitment," she said. "I thought it was the right thing to do."

In April of 2013, Kopp had blood drawn for further testing, then waited on the patient's status. She received a call in June telling her the transplant was no longer a viable option. The patient wasn't doing well.

"I was pretty upset about it, because I'd gotten my hopes up and it was summer, as a student the perfect time for me to do it," she said.

In August, just as she was getting ready to accept a job at Children's Mercy Hospital and start classes, she received another call asking her to extend her commitment to October. The next week, she flew across the country for a physical examination. The patient had made what doctors called a miraculous rally and was strong enough for transplant.

Kopp underwent a peripheral stem cell harvest, which in and of itself wasn't too painful or uncomfortable, she said. However, each day the week before the procedure, she had to endure twice-daily injections to make her bones produce and release more stem cells. She said the bone pain caused by the injections was substantial.

"Quite honestly, I was glad it was enduring, because it helped add to the experience," she said. "It helped me truly embrace it."

The procedure of the DKMS Foundation bone marrow registry is to give updates on recipients to donors at six weeks, six months and one year. Kopp received a six-week update on the recipient of her bone marrow, and the recipient was doing well. The stem cells had grafted to the bone, and the patient was expected to be home for Thanksgiving.

"It was the best news I could've received," Kopp said.

At the one-year anniversary of the transplant, Kopp said she can learn the identity of the recipient ... if she wants. Now that it has become personal and she is fully invested, that's an easy choice.

"I do want to know," she said.

"I figure, I went through it all. I might as well take it all the way."

A native of Concordia, Mo., Kopp decided she wanted to experience a larger college straight out of high school, so she attended Kansas University her first two years. But, when it came to selecting where she'd attend nursing school, Avila, with its smaller class sizes and 1-on-1 student-teacher interaction, was an easy choice.

As it turned out, Avila led her to the biggest decision of her young life. It's a decision she's very proud of and a journey that promises to stick with her the rest of her life.

"It's all been a huge growing process," Kopp said. "There's a humility and pride that comes with it, a pride you carry with you. It was so worth it."

"And, how this came about was an Avila neighbor came forth with four grandsons in need of a transplant. Avila's mission of serving the dear neighbor has been relevant throughout the whole process. We've now served a dear neighbor near and far." 📖

*"Quite honestly, I was glad it was enduring, because it helped add to the experience. It helped me truly embrace it."*

*Tori Kopp*





**99.7 FM the Point Video Shoot**



**Hy-Vee Shootout**



**Late-Night Finals Breakfast**



**Kevin Mac Performance**



**Ash Wednesday Mass**







**Dr. Marcia Miller  
Lecture**



**Day of the Dead  
Celebration**



**Etiquette Dinner**



**American Marketing  
Association Seminar:  
IKEA**



**Ethnic Food and Culture Celebration**



*Great times! Greater memories!*



# Avila authors

*Faculty lends expertise through the written word on a wide range of topics*

The knowledge held by Avila University's faculty is as divergent as it is vast. And, the dispersal of that knowledge doesn't stop in the classrooms or with their students. Members of the faculty have written countless research papers, books, manuscripts and poetry for a wide variety of publications, publishers, publishing presses and companies. Several are hard at work on recently submitted pieces of interest.

**Dotty Hamilton**, Ph.D., dean of the School of Visual Arts and Communication, wrote a chapter for a book that will be published by Scarecrow Press. The title of the book is *Food and Film: Bringing Something New to the Table*. It's a collection of essays aimed at new ideas in the food-and-film discourse. Hamilton's chapter, tentatively titled, *Appetite and Aroma: Visual and Narrative Strategies and the Perception of Taste and Smell in Korean Films*, *The Recipe* and *301/302* takes a look at well-known food films, but in surprising and innovative ways.

**Leslie Dorrough Smith**, Ph.D., assistant professor of religious studies and director of the Women's and Gender Studies Department, had a post that originally appeared on the blog, *Culture on the Edge* re-posted by the *Bulletin for the Study of Religion*. The article was titled, *Why Durkheim Was Right: On the Perils of Being a Young, Cute Shoplifter* and related an old tale of her middle child to French sociologist, social psychologist and philosopher Emile Durkheim's claim that beliefs that we often perceive to be so central to our identities often are arrived at only after sufficient (and, usually physical) conditioning creates them.

**Stanley Banks**, assistant professor of English and Avila's resident poet laureate, had three poems published in *CANTOS*, the professional literary magazine for Missouri Baptist University and also had poetry published in *I-70 Review*, a national literary magazine. He has two poetry readings – April 10 at Emporia State University and April 17 at Woodneath Library Center in Kansas City, Mo. Banks' most recent book of poetry, *Blue Issues*, is on sale now in the Avila Bookstore.

**Grant Beck**, Ph.D., assistant professor of business, had a research manuscript, titled *The Effect of Changes in Decision Aid Bias on Learning: Evidence of Functional Fixation*, accepted for publication in the *Journal of Information Systems* Spring 2014 issue. Other authors were Rina Limor, Vairam Arunachalam and Patrick Wheeler.


**Andria Stokes**, Ed.D., director for the Center for Transformational Learning, was co-author of *Powerful Learning Communities, A Guide to Developing Student, Faculty and Professional Learning Communities to Improve Student Success and Organizational Effectiveness*. The book constitutes a comprehensive guide for readers who want a broad strategic view of learning communities, enabling them to identify which type of learning community best meets the needs of their students and the context and mission of their institution.

**Wendy Johnson Donnell**, Ph.D., assistant professor for literacy, was a consultant to Kansas City Mayor Sly James' office, developing a training manual for volunteer reading tutors.



**Karin Gastreich**, Ph.D., associate professor of biology, had her second novel, titled *High Maga*, published by Hadley Rille Books in Kansas City, Mo. in April 2014. It is a sequel and the continuing story of the title character of Gastreich's first novel, *Eolyn*, which was published back in 2011. Written in the tradition of epic and romantic fantasy, *High Maga* is a character-based novel featuring a strong female protagonist whose personal journey is set against a rich tapestry of history and culture.

From the *Publishers Weekly* review of *Eolyn*:

Gastreich allows her heroes to have flaws – including moments of cowardice – and some victories bring new sorrows. Vigorously told deceptions and battle scenes will satisfy fans of traditional epic fantasy with a romantic thread. 



## Recommendation leads to enriching first-year experience

When Ricky Farrell first traveled across Missouri to Kansas City looking at colleges, Avila University wasn't on his radar. But an aunt who graduated from Avila suggested that, while he was in town, he ought to carve out time for a visit in south KC at 119th and Wornall.

Farrell will be forever grateful for his aunt's advice. Quickly falling in love with the Avila campus and its highly-personable community of staff, faculty and students, Farrell today finds himself at the end of his first semester and has thoroughly embraced and enjoyed his first-year experience.

"I liked that Avila was small, and the fact that it was a Catholic-based university played a part in my decision," Farrell said. "It's been really good. I really like it here. It's been a lot of work. But, the people here ... everyone has been so welcoming, fun to be around and so supportive."

Farrell's experience begins with academics, which for him is anything but a traditional course. His lifelong love of theatre, coupled with his interest in computers, led him to seek a double major – vocal performance and computer science.

"I like performing more," he said, "but wanted to expand my opportunities."

Farrell's kept quite busy at both. He landed a role in the chorus of Avila's theatre production last fall of Young Frankenstein – "I was in about every scene," he said.

In his computer science curricula, he's concentrated on graphic design.

Farrell also is a work study in Avila's Office of Marketing and Communication, where he helps design and update various University web sites. And, of utmost

importance to him given his Catholic upbringing, he's participated in several community service and service learning activities and is a singer in the Sunday Mass Choir.

He worked for a day at Harvesters – The Community Food Network as part of the First-Year Experience and, most

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recently, made a microloan through FINCA.org, a task that dated back to Avila's Harry S. Truman Lecture Series speaker Bob Harris, who made micro loans through KIVA.org.

"I made a \$20 loan to a woman named Idah Banda in Zambia," Farrell said. "She's raising six children and four grandchildren and trying to put them all through school. She is ready to expand her small grocery business."

Paige Illum, Ph.D., coordinator of retention and the First-Year Experience, said, "The purpose of the experience is to engage our students through a global issue. Our goal is to provide the students with a meaningful academic experience while living our University mission and the mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph to help our dear neighbors.

"Avila's mission shares that we will prepare students for responsible lifelong contributions to the global community. This first-semester experience is the initial step in accomplishing this commitment to our students."

A sense of satisfaction is something Farrell has found a lot during his short time at Avila.

"I really like it," he said. "It's very personal, and everybody is there to help you. You aren't a number, you're a person and taken into consideration." 🗣️

*"When you help others expecting nothing in return, you get this tremendous sense of generosity and hope for the future. It teaches you about yourself. You get a sense of satisfaction knowing you've helped someone else."*

**Ricky Farrell**







Photo by: Thomas Photographic

## *Avila University's 38th Annual Steer Dinner & Auction*

It was another record-breaking night for Avila University at the 38th Annual Steer Dinner & Auction, held February 15, 2014. Under the Steer leadership of Dave '76 and Geri Frantze, honorary chairs, and Kenneth and Marilyn Hager, event chairs, this year's gala raised \$780,012. Nearly 600 Avila alumni and University friends enjoyed a delicious steak and seafood dinner, a spirited live and silent auction, had fun in the photo booth, and danced the night away to the Saucy Jack Band. Avila Scholarship recipient Teri Martin shared her heartfelt and inspirational story of struggle and triumph as the featured student speaker. Len Jennings from KMBC, master of ceremony, and The Nigro Brothers, event auctioneers, kept the program fun and entertaining. View more Steer photos at [www.avila.edu/steer](http://www.avila.edu/steer).

*Inspire. Influence. Transform.*



Gathering together during the social hour were Geri and Dave '76 Frantze, board of trustee, honorary chairs, Nancy and John McCarthy, President Ron and Suzanne Slepitzka, Marilyn and Ken Hager, board of trustee, event chairs.



Mark Thompson, board of trustee, and Amy Thompson and Anne Dunn '75 and Steve Dunn, board of trustee, stop to chat during the social hour.



Ivan and Mona Moran '96 arrive to the big party.



Dave Frantze '76 greets the audience with Geri, his wife, at his side.



Martha Healy '91, '94, Antoni and Connie Firner '78, greet President Slepitzka as they arrive to Steer Dinner.





Connie Fahey, Patty Waris, President Ron Slepitzka, and Sue Fahey enjoy the evening.



John and Nancy McCarthy, Linda Tharpe, Ryan and Erika McCarthy, Tina and Steve Kurtz, Lauren McCarthy '07 and Tim Herre head to the Steer After Party.



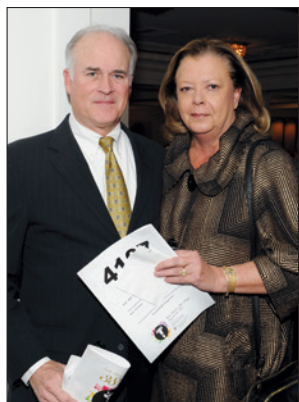
Avila football coach Justin Berna, Chance Alberswerth '13, Emilee Bickelman '12, and Arielle Berna visit during the social hour.



Teri Martin, freshman, shared her personal scholarship story from the stage.



Dr. Tom and Virginia '58 Coppinger, board of counselor, Mary Beth Compton, Sr. Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, PhD. visit in the silent auction area.



Bob '78 and Pat '79 Hardin arrive to Steer ready to reconnect with other alums.



Allison Lawrence '05, Karen MacLean, and Ron Lawrence pause in front of the silent auction room.



Dr. Tom Fritzlen, board of counselor, Mary Kitchin '57, Jeanne Olofson '92, '94, '11, board of trustee, Mary Ellen Clark '73, and Greg Lever '85, board of counselor, greet each other during the social hour.



Sitting at the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet table were Sr. Ruth Stuckel, CSJ, Nicole Nicoll, CSJA, Sr. Ann Charles Everett, CSJ, Sr. Mary Ann Donovan, CSJ, Sr. Ann Albrecht, CSJ. Back row: Sr. Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Sr. Ann Landers, CSJ, Sr. Rose McLarney, CSJ, '62, Sr. Laverne Aufmuth, CSJ, Sr. Margaret Vincent, CSJ, '85, and Sr. Gabrielle Smits, CSJ.



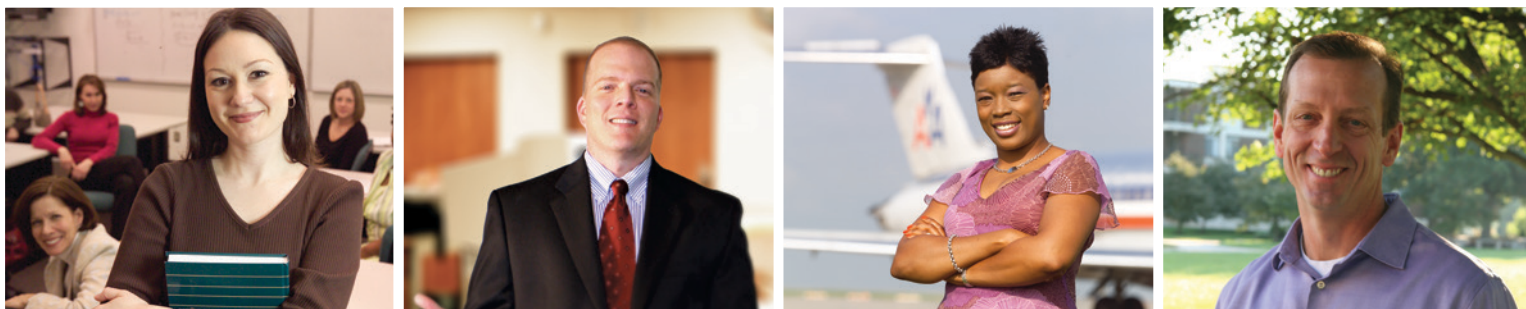
Children's Mercy Hospital attendees visit with President Slepitzka during the event. Chris Venjohn, Tally Sharma, Heath Roberts '10.



Mark Thompson, board of trustee, Joe Fahey, board of trustee, Susan and Kevin McGreevy greet one another before heading into the ballroom.



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- Masters of Science in Psychology

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- Project management

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- Strategic Human Resources

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# Future Eagles!

We know future Avila University students are dreaming of college and making the world a better place. As alumni, we value your opinion. We want to know great students that you know. We welcome your recommendations for prospective students at [avila.edu/alumni/inquiry.asp](https://avila.edu/alumni/inquiry.asp).

*Today, 98% of our students are awarded financial aid. As a matter of fact, Avila awards more than \$10 million annually in financial aid to deserving students.*

Your contributions make this possible.

Make a difference in a student's life today!

[avila.edu/give](https://avila.edu/give)





# September 26, 27 & 28 Homecoming

# 2014

## SAVE THE DATE

Classes being honored:

1954 1964 1974 1984 1994 2004  
1959 1969 1979 1989 1999 2009



Homecoming is a special time of year at Avila University for alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and University friends.

It's a time to connect with friends, reminisce about days gone by and reflect on the impact Avila has had in your life.

*Come back to campus for a family-friendly weekend of fun and inspiration.*

### Friday, September 26

- Heritage Day Mass
- Heritage Day Luncheon
- Campus Tours
- Class of 1964 50-Year Class Reunion & Reception
- Dinner Theatre

### Saturday, September 27

- Tailgate, BBQ and Football game
- Campus Tours
- Class of 1989 25-year Reunion
- Alumni Reception
- Dinner Theatre (Alumni Night)

### Sunday, September 28

- Alumni Mass
- Alumni Association Awards Luncheon
- Goppert Theatre production (matinee)

Check the Homecoming website for event updates at [avila.edu/alumni/homecoming](http://avila.edu/alumni/homecoming) or call the Alumni Department at 816.501.3780 or email [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu)

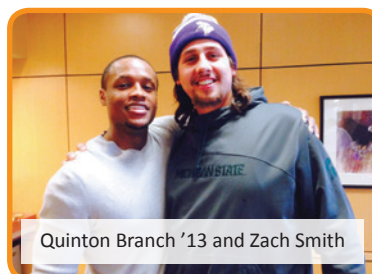
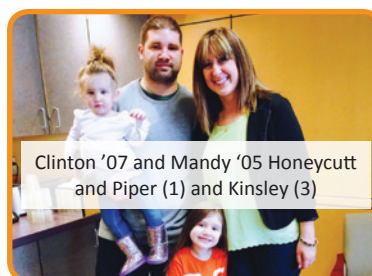
### *Celebrating a Class Reunion?*

Many Avila alumni support the University every year, with an unrestricted gift to the Annual Fund. If you're celebrating a special class reunion this year (is it your 10th, 25th, 50th year since graduation?) Avila asks you to consider making a special Class Reunion Gift to the University in honor of someone that has made a difference in your life – perhaps a Sister, faculty member or family member.

As you reflect on your college years, your college friendships, memories and the impact Avila has had in your life's journey – consider making a Reunion Gift to the Avila Scholarship Fund, Avila's Centennial Campaign, or a designation in your estate plans. For more information, contact Robin Rowland at 816.501.2450 or email [robin.rowland@avila.edu](mailto:robin.rowland@avila.edu).



# FUN WITH ALUMS!



## AVILA ALUMNI BOARD: 2013–2014

**Laura (Wilkerson) Barr '04**  
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Harcros Chemicals, Inc.

**Michael Stolberg '09**  
President Elect  
Lawing Financial

**Jacob Zinn '11**  
H3TV.com



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Ariston Alumni Reunion & Reception

**April 29, 2014, 5:30 pm**  
**Avila University**

Did you receive the Ariston Award, the highest award given to a graduating senior student each year since 1954? Come back to campus for a special Ariston Alumni Reunion and Reception on April 29 – to connect with fellow Ariston Awardees and meet the 2014 Ariston Award Recipient. RSVP by April 23 at 816.501.2450 or email [robin.rowland@avila.edu](mailto:robin.rowland@avila.edu).



## Alumni “At Last” Bash

**May 8, 2014, 5:30–7:30 pm**  
**Martin City Brewing Company**  
**(In their adjacent event space)**  
**410 E. 135th St.**  
**Kansas City, MO 64114**

Join us as we celebrate and congratulate the newest Avila alumni from the Class of 2014. No RSVP required. For questions, call 816.501.3780 or email [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu).



## Donor BBQ

**May 13, 2014, 5:00–7:00 pm**  
**Jeanne Hamilton Olofson Plaza**  
**(Marian Center if inclement weather)**

Let us say thank you in person at the Annual Donor BBQ! Enjoy delicious BBQ and mingle with fellow Avila alumni and University friends. RSVP by May 1 at 816.501.3780 or by email at [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu).



## Alumni Day at Worlds of Fun & Oceans of Fun

**June 7, 2014**

Bring the kids to this annual family-friendly event at Worlds of Fun and Oceans of Fun. Discounted tickets are \$24 (kids under 2 are free) includes passes to both parks and admission to the Avila Alumni Picnic. Online ticket sales at [avila.edu/alumni](http://avila.edu/alumni) available after May 1. Call 816.501.3780 for more information.



## 3rd Annual 1940s Class Reunion & Luncheon

**July 18, 2014, 12:00 pm**  
**Avila University**

Calling our alumni from the 1940s for the 3rd Annual 1940s Class Reunion & Luncheon. Please RSVP by July 9 by calling 816.501.3780 or emailing [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu).

## Class Alumni Partner Annual Dinner & Meeting

**July 31, 2014, 6:00 pm**  
**Avila University**

Class Alumni Partners (CAPS) are invited to come back to campus for their annual dinner and meeting to receive a campus update and kick off another Homecoming Season. RSVP by July 25 by calling 816.501.3780 or email [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu). If you'd like to sign up to be a Class Alumni Partner contact [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu).

## Homecoming

# 2014

## Homecoming Weekend

**September 26–28, 2014**

Reconnect, reminisce and reflect on your college days during Homecoming Weekend 2014. Classes being honored are those ending in the number “4” and “9.” Homecoming Weekend provides something for everyone! For more Homecoming details, visit [avila.edu/alumni/homecoming](http://avila.edu/alumni/homecoming).

## Class of 1964's 50-Year Class Reunion

**September 26, 2014, 2:30–4:30 pm**  
**Avila University**

Ladies of 1964 – it's been 50 years since you walked across the graduation stage. Come back to Avila to celebrate the 50-year milestone and reconnect with your classmates. A special 50-year reunion reception is being organized during Homecoming Weekend this year and you are invited! Visit your 50-year class reunion website at [avila.edu/alumni/homecoming/reunions](http://avila.edu/alumni/homecoming/reunions). For more information about your 50-year reunion, call 816.501.2450 or email [robin.rowland@avila.edu](mailto:robin.rowland@avila.edu).



## Alumni Cruise with Avalon Waterways: from Paris to Normandy's Landing Beaches

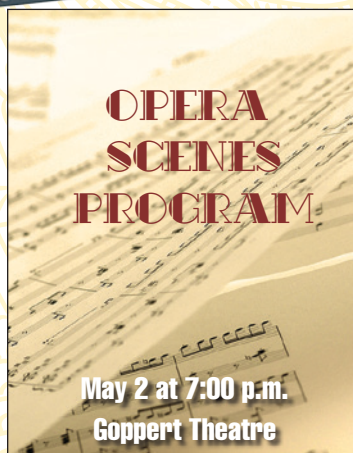
**September 29–October 7, 2014**

Join other alumni for a journey along the beautiful, historic Seine River. Prices vary. For more information, call 816.501.3780 or visit [avila.edu/alumni](http://avila.edu/alumni).

Find out about the latest Alumni news and activities by following us on social media. The Alumni Association is on Facebook and LinkedIn and we want to hear from you.

You can also sign up for alumni newsletters and special emails at [avila.edu/alumni](http://avila.edu/alumni) or call 816.501.3780.





Call 816.501.3699  
or visit [www.avila.edu/theatre/tickets.asp](http://www.avila.edu/theatre/tickets.asp) for reservations

# STUDENTS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES INSPIRED BY AVILA.

Trozzolo Communications Group is proud to have been chosen to develop Avila University's new "Be Inspired" brand campaign, launching in the fall of 2014. Collaborating with such talented and visionary administrators has been a truly inspiring experience for us all.



## from Avila's Social Network

"Avila has more than a million reasons to be proud." *via email after meeting the Mabee Challenge* – Joe Fahey, Vice Chair, Avila Board of Trustees

"Props to Avila University for being among the first to be a part of #HAPPYKANSASCITY!" *Facebook post after first stop to film their Happy Video* – 99.7 FM The Point Radio Station

"My sisters and I attended Avila from 1975-1989. I was the youngest of four girls that were at Avila. Since then, I have had a niece, cousin, and daughter attend Avila. My family and I always felt special when in your presence. We were truly blessed to have such a loving and warm environment to grow and flourish. Thank you Sr. Olive Louise. Happy Birthday!" *Facebook post* – Sheila Shiflett Luehrs '89, '14

"Sr. Olive Louise took a personal interest in the college and students. She helped me to get a scholarship that allowed me to finish nursing school. A 30 year career of giving back was in part due to her facilitating that scholarship. To this day I still brag about Avila and the great education I received while there. Thank you and hope you had a lovely day." *Facebook post* – Cheryl Campos '84

"Everyone was very helpful and friendly. The dorm rooms were pretty spacious. The visit to the nursing skills class was very informative. My daughter looks forward to being an Avila Eagle in the fall." *Facebook post* – Pam Howard Gordon

"Wendi Fugitt, residence life coordinator, dove in Saturday at the Polar Plunge Kansas City for Special Olympics Missouri." *Twitter* – @SOMissouri

"Avila teams with medical tech giant Cerner to offer a new certificate program in instructional design." *Twitter* – @Cerner

"Learning all about @DesignByIKEA at the #amakc seminar! @AvilaUniversity is a terrific host!" *Twitter* – @JohnHoltNews

"I was unsure on what majors to choose from when I decided to transfer to Avila from JCCC. I started in Education, but decided that wasn't for me. So I spoke with an academic advisor from both the traditional college and the Advantage program. I knew I could not financially quit my job to study full time through the traditional program, so I called Rachel Robinson and told her I wanted to join the Advantage program to study Healthcare Management. Rachel helped me apply and get my transcripts. She was right there for me to show me the bookstore. Avila has been a blessing to me. I now have a better job and I got a 4.0 my first semester!!" *Facebook post* – Erika Danyell Fields

## Seeking Alumni Mentors

The Alumni Department is actively seeking Avila alumni and University friends to be mentors for current Avila students. If you are interested in learning more about how you can mentor a student, call 816.501.3780 or email [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu).





## AVILA COLLEGE

Class of 1964



## Congratulations Class of 1964 !

It's time to celebrate your 50 year reunion! Join your classmates for a 1964 Class Reunion during Homecoming Weekend, September 26-28, 2014. The Avila University Alumni Department will commemorate your special, "golden" milestone with a class reunion reception, pinning you with your 50 year pin, campus tour, class photo, a 50 year reunion memory booklet, and more!

Special thanks to **Mary Agnes Morrow-Bax '64**, **Mary Ruth Donnelly '64**, **Rosemary Engel Fahlstrom '64**, and **Vicki (Michaels) Hanes '64** for volunteering to contact 1964 alumni and encourage class reunion participation.

Visit [avila.edu/alumni/homecoming/reunions](http://avila.edu/alumni/homecoming/reunions) for the latest information, including hotel information, or contact the Alumni Department at 816-501-3780 or email [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu).

## The Golden Girls of '64

**Jesdon (Haake) McCowen** is looking forward to celebrating with her 1964 classmates at their 50 Year Class Reunion in September. Jesdon, now retired, worked many years in the hospital and private lab setting. She specialized in microbiology, hematology and kidney function. In her retirement she enjoys golf, bridge, gardening and Bible study.



**Kathleen (Hegarty) Thorne** taught for 28 years. In 1992, she began a new career as a writer. She has produced five books. Her third book, *They Put the Flag a Flyin' - The Roscommon Volunteers*, now in its third edition, focuses on Ireland's War for Independence and Civil War. The last two books are part of a three-book volume series dealing with the Irish Republican Army from 1913-1962. *Pictured here with husband Lew.*

**Kathryn (Heine) McIntyre** went on to earn a master of education degree at the University of Missouri in Columbia in 1966. She worked for the Hickman Mills School District for nearly 28 years, first as a teacher and then 26 years as a school counselor. Kathryn has enjoyed traveling and has visited 40 countries and 49 states.

**Martha Harriet (Shumway) Maher** worked as a teacher, nurse and public health manager. She is blessed with five children, 21 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Her favorite college memories include College Day parade, Sister Olive Louise, the faculty and singing for the Plaza Lighting Ceremony.

**Mary (Castrop) Morrow-Bax** was a teacher for four years, worked in banking for 11 years, and then worked 26 years in senior living. She and her husband have three

children and seven grandchildren. She volunteers with Community Services Board, Metro Stage Board, Little Theater of Alexandria, and Dining for Women. She is looking forward to seeing her 1964 classmates at the 50-year class reunion.



**Mary Ann (Dunn) Brown** was a secondary English/French teacher for 37 years. She is married to Spencer Brown, and they have a total of six children. Mary Ann volunteers for Seton Center and Hogan Primary School. In her free time, she enjoys tennis, golf, bridge, reading and spending time with her eight grandchildren.



**Mary Margaret (Salamone) Byram** worked for TWA for seven years, then went back to college to become a certified teacher in New Jersey. She taught for 25 years. She enjoys oil painting, reading as hobbies. She also volunteers at St. Vincent de Paul, Neighborhood Watch, and Children's Literacy at Mass. *Pictured here with husband Robert Henn.*

**Mary Ruth Donnelly** is a retired professor of English from Southwestern Illinois College. Her volunteer work includes serving as board president of St. Louis Poetry Center and board member of River Styx. Her favorite college memories are the College Day parades and Friday walks down Main Street for lunch.



**Mickey (Bien) Sharp** taught one year and then substitute taught for 12 years. She has been a residential realtor since 1986. She and her husband Don have two children and five grandchildren. She enjoys exercising, playing bridge, golf and gardening. Her favorite college memories include buzzing Rockhurst College and teaching S. Felice how to drive.

**Patricia (Geraghty) Clark** has served in several roles during her career, including computer programmer, special education grant work at Kansas University, special education teacher and president of the National Tutoring Institute. Clark enjoys volunteering with Meals on Wheels, as a reading tutor, and with a local soup kitchen.

**Rosemary (Engel) Fahlstrom** worked as a registered nurse at Menorah Medical Center in Overland Park, Kan. and Baptist Medical Center in Kansas City, Mo. for 50 years. She continues to work one day a week at the hospital and enjoys volunteering at St. Anne's Church and School.

**Sally (Otto) Merten** served in the U.S. Air Force for three years and cared for Vietnam wounded in a Medevac Unit. She later taught nursing students as a clinical instructor in two diploma schools of nursing. She is a member of several nonprofit boards, including WETA TV/FM Public Broadcasting and Women in Military Service for America Memorial.

**Judy (Briscoe) Dell'Orco** lives in Allen, Tx. with her husband Bob. They have three children and seven grandchildren. Judy spent 25 years as a clinical microbiologist and research technologist for five years. Her favorite college memories are her French classes taught by S. Rita Agnes.



**'53 Mary Cerkey** worked for Southwestern Bell Company (SBC) and was recruited to work in their legal department. Shortly after being hired, Mary became pregnant with her first child, Kathy, and retired from SBC to become a stay-at-home mother. Her husband, Ernie, retired from the U.S. Safety Service and the U.S. Post Office after a combined 46 years. One of their granddaughters, Anna Marie Costello, is a former Miss Oklahoma United States in 2012 and is pursuing a modeling and acting career in New York. She was recently seen at the Oscars walking down the Red Carpet.

**'57 Josephine (Boone) Himmelberg** received her nursing diploma certificate in '55 then went on to obtain her BSN in '57. She recently came back to campus and toured the nursing labs and was extremely impressed with the technology. JoAnn donated her Avila pin, and nursing pin to the display of nursing memorabilia. JoAnn and her husband, Robert, live in Ardsley, NY where Robert has taught economics at Fordham for 40 years.

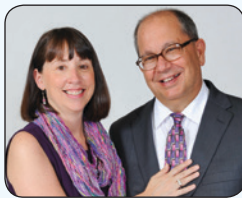
**'67 Lesley (Lewis) Weaver, Linda (Lewis) Reaby '67, and Norma Lewis-Lavik '58**, reunited on the Avila campus in December to have lunch, swap stories of college memories, and tour the School of Nursing. Lesley is a successful nurse anesthetist in Lee's Summit, Mo. Linda continues her ground-breaking breast cancer research advocacy work around the globe. And, Norma is retired from a successful career in higher education.

**'74 Dr. John Groff '74 and Mary (Moriarty) Groff '75** are retired and living in St. Louis near their daughter and Mary's siblings. They recently attended a send-off event in St. Louis at Favazza's for incoming Avila freshmen. John is a past recipient of the School of Science and Health Alumni Award at Avila.

**'74 Amy (Goltman) Coughlin** is an Employee Health/Occupational Health Nurse for Community Hospital Network Indianapolis for the last 22 years. This is after working in Missouri, Colorado, Korea, Germany, Indiana, and Maryland. When not working she enjoys time with her family and traveling to Dominica.

**'75 Linda Hezel** has used her Avila nursing degree well. Her 20-year career included stints in cardiac critical care, home health care, and college classrooms. At one time a certified family NP, Hezel has a master's degree in community health nursing and a doctorate in education. But it was at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, in a course she established for nursing students pursuing bachelor's degrees, that her long-

standing interest in the vital link between ecology and human health took its clearest form. Today Hezel practices what she calls "the purest form of nursing" - restoring healthful biodiversity to 15 acres of highly eroded prairie near Kearney, Mo.



**'76 Dave Frantze** and his wife, Geri, were Honorary Chairs of Avila University's 38th Annual Steer Dinner and Auction on February 15, 2014. Under Dave and Geri's leadership, the event raised a record \$780,012 for Avila University. Dave also serves as a trustee for Avila.

**'77 Georgia Schmittling** recently retired from the Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City as instructional coordinator, Institute for Workforce Innovation. She and her husband, Gordon, have been married 37 years. She is enjoying retirement and has joined Med-Life Players for a production of Cats and volunteering. Georgia has three children - Melanie Richert '01 in communications, Lance Schmettling '04 in art and Amanda, who graduated from the KC Art Institute. Georgia's sister is also an Avila University alumnus, **Elaine Neis '79**.

**'78 Bob Hardin and '79 Pat (Cronin) Hardin** were honored in March by Notre Dame de Sion Catholic School in Kansas City, Mo. for their many years of service and dedication to Notre Dame de Sion and overall support of Catholic education in Kansas City.

**'79 Caryl Goodyear-Bruch** began a new position with the American Association of Critical Care Nurses as a senior director.

**'81 Karen Kage**, after spending two years at Kansas State University to study veterinary medicine, changed her degree and transferred to Avila University to pursue chemistry and a career in research. She enjoyed the personalized education and the small classrooms that Avila University had to offer...and it was close to home. Karen did graduate work in bio-chemistry at Kansas University and KU Medical Center before moving to Chicago for her 31-year bio-chem and pharmaceutical research career. Karen is a very accomplished Research Scientist and has recently moved to Hollywood, Fla. where she is enjoying friends and warmer weather.



**'82 Kay Julian** was promoted to executive vice president, Northeast Region, for the National MS Society. Kay began her career with the National MS Society in 1991 as the director of marketing and development of the Mid-America Chapter. Two years later, she was named chapter president and has been in that position for 20 years. Kay also serves on the Board of Counselors for Avila University. *Pictured here with her son.*

**'85 Greg Lever** is now the executive director for the National Institute for Construction Excellence (NICE). His role is to partner with companies to enhance work force development for the trades in Kansas City.

**'85 Scott White** is working as an administrator at Honeywell, Kansas City, Mo. He and his wife, Diann, have three children, all in college. Scott was convinced to major in chemistry by S. Marie Joan Harris and it has served him well. Scott went on to obtain a BA - Computer Science at UMKC. Scott works with Bill Frede - whose wife, Doris, teaches accounting at Avila - at Honeywell. In his spare time, Scott is very passionate about being president of the Red Bridge Lions Club and enjoys working on the acreage surrounding his home.

**'86 Dr. Barbara Foster** joined the staff of Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI) in 2002 as assistant member in the Department of Pharmacology & Therapeutics. She also is an assistant professor in the molecular pharmacology & cancer therapeutics program, Roswell Park Graduate Division, University of Buffalo. She earned her doctoral degree in anatomy at the University of California, San Francisco, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in cell biology at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston. Dr. Foster comes to RPCI from the Department of Urology at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Foster is a member of the American Association for Cancer Research, Society for Basic Urologic Research and Women in Cancer Research. She has authored or co-authored more than 30 journal articles, abstracts and book chapters.

**'89 John Baldwin, Carmen (Canzonere) Bisacca '89 and Michelle Graff '89** are working hard to reach out to the Avila College Class of 1989 in recognition of their 25th class reunion. Mark your calendar now to



celebrate with them and the class of 1989 during Homecoming Weekend, which is September 26-28 on the Avila campus.

**'89 Sandra Campbell** was nominated for the 2014 John C. Maxwell Leadership Award, where she rose to one of the top 30 candidates in all ten categories and one of three in Arts & Entertainment. In 2012 after nearly 42 years of career federal service, Sandra retired from the Federal Aviation Administration. Sandra is a licensed and ordained minister and serves as an adjunct professor at Webster University.

**'89 Darla Carr** received her bachelor's in biology with a minor in chemistry. She has a vivid memory of almost setting Larry Sullivan, Ph.D., on fire in a lab. Darla enjoyed the small, intimate environment at Avila. She went on to obtain her master's in mental health counseling from Emporia State University in 2003 and would love to do counseling for a living one day. Darla has 25 years of reference and forensic laboratory with exposure to a wide variety of laboratory instrumentation and assays and six years in management of a CLIA/CAP certified laboratory. She is the laboratory supervisor at Abaxis Veterinary Reference Laboratory.

**'89 Kerry (Dugan) Eckart** is the secretary at Archbishop O'Hara High School in Kansas City, Mo. She has two teenage boys that keep her very busy. She spends her free time cheering them on in soccer, tennis and racing. She is looking forward to seeing her Avila College classmates at the 25-year class reunion this Homecoming Weekend.

**'89 Tobey (Klaus) Carrel**, along with her husband and son, are participating in Shave to Save, an event that supports the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge in Kansas City. On April 25, 2014 they will be shaving their heads in support of raising funds for cancer research and patient care.

**'89 Todd Perkins** is the regional safety director at Airgas in St. Louis, Mo. He came to Avila University by way of the University of Texas in Austin. He transferred to Avila where he became extremely active in campus life and also received his bachelor's in chemistry. Todd continued his studies with the CSJs, obtaining his MBA from Fontbonne University in 2008. Todd remembers the closeness of the Avila University community and the sage advising and guidance of S. Marie Joan Harris. Todd is married to Gina and they have a ten year old son, Charlie Morgan.

**'89 Michelle Graff** was promoted to vice president of administration at Gillis Center in Kansas City, Mo. Michelle has been with Gillis for 19 years, starting first on the program side.

**'91 Jason Porter** recently moved back to the Kansas City area from Joplin, Mo. He works at NAHCA Care Force. He enjoys staying in contact with his former Avila basketball teammates and recently volunteered to be an Avila Class Alumni Partner.

**'92 Byron Ginsburg** has been in marketing his entire career and has recently started a new venture called ClientKudos. Byron taps his marketing prowess and helps organizations move the needle by documenting the success of current supporters -- and communicating how the organization made that success possible - thus giving prospects even more reasons to begin or continue a beneficial relationship.



**'93 Jim Huber Jr.** is the director of coach development for Breakthrough Basketball and a head coach for MOKAN Elite Basketball. Last January, he and wife Ashley were blessed with a son and named him Kaden James Huber. When not traveling for basketball, Jim enjoys spending time with his family.



**'94 Dyanne Bean** volunteered at this year's 38th Annual Steer Dinner & Auction. She was reconnected with a past professor of hers, S. Ruth Stuckel. The two enjoyed seeing each other after many years. *Pictured here with Karen MacLean volunteering at Avila's Steer Dinner in February.*

**'98 Kate Egan** recently became the company manager for the new Broadway production, *Rocky*, directed by Alex Timbers with music by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty.

**'99 Isaiah Hultman** is vice president for Glazers Distributors of Missouri. He is married to Shannah, and they have three children. He coaches his daughter's basketball and soccer teams as well as his son's basketball, baseball and football teams.

**'01 Ginny (Goebel) Nyberg** and her husband are busy raising three beautiful children. She teaches at UMKC School of Nursing and Health Studies. She is in her 14th year at Children's Mercy Hospital

in Clinical Informatics and Practice. They recently attended Avila's Steer Dinner in February and enjoyed reconnecting with former classmates.

**'03 Ivori (Johnson) Smith**, after five years in the Financial Aid Office at the Kansas City Art Institute, began a new career with Johnson County Community College in October as financial aid assistant of advising and processing. She and her husband are looking forward to seeing other alumni at the June Alumni Day at Worlds of Fun!

**'04 Brandon Carter** and his family recently moved to Lake Mary, FL. Brandon is the new theatre director at Lake Mary Preparatory School. He lives happily with his beautiful wife Rebecca, two sons Finnigan(3) and Breccan(1)

**'04 Brian Gilmore** is the head of project standards within the Clinical Data Standards Group at Celgene Corporation. Celgene is a New Jersey-based pharmaceutical company. Brian works from their Overland Park, Kan. office.

**'05 Allie (MacLean) Lawrence** is currently math test development coordinator for the Dynamic Learning Map Project at KU's Achievement and Assessment Institute. Allie is working on her Ph.D. in special education with a focus in autism at KU. When she isn't busy studying and writing tests, she enjoys spending time with her family, gardening, attending sporting events, and traveling. She and her husband will be traveling to Muskoka, Ontario for a friend's wedding this summer.

**'07, '13 Megan Carnes** is in her third year of teaching at Nativity of Mary Catholic School in Independence, Mo. She has taught social studies, religion and is teaching English. She went back to Avila in 2009 to earn her teaching certificate and went on to complete her masters in teaching and curriculum. While at Avila, she received the Dr. Laura Sloan Outstanding Student Teacher Award (2012) as well as having the opportunity to present at the AACU conference in Boston with Andria Stokes, Ph.D., and Wendy Donnell, Ph.D. Megan is working on her education specialist in principalship and resides in North Kansas City. She is looking forward to a summer spent traveling around Europe.

**'07 David Harris** is a system administrator at GEHA. He and his wife recently attended Avila's 38th Annual Steer Dinner & Auction. This is their second year attending Steer Dinner, and David looks forward to seeing other MSOD 2007 alumni joining him at the event in future years.

**'07 Elizabeth Lewis** is participating in the 2014 Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Mid America Chapter Women of the Year

Campaign, which is running now through May 29, 2014. She is participating in the competition and raising funds for blood cancer research in honor of her mother, who was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia in 2012 and is currently in remission. Her mother is her hero and inspiration.

**'07 Brian and Tiffany (Swan) Poterbin**

'07 welcomed the birth of their son Deacon Patrick on November 12, 2013. He joins big sister Cadence. Tiffany completed her doctorate in chiropractic medicine in 2012. Brian recently began a new career as a loan officer with Veterans United Home Loans. Prior to that, Brian was with Enterprise as a fleet manager.



**'08 Corey Vitt** was married on Saturday, March 29 to Sarah Reape. The couple will reside in Kansas City.

**'08 Shawn Lang** is a proud grandmother of Karter, who was born in April 2013. She celebrated eight years with DST in November. She recently presented in Albany, New York: "When Generations Collide-A New Diversity Issue to the Capital Region Postal Customer Council and Chamber of Commerce." She credits her Avila MSOD with giving her the opportunity of being a regularly-selected national presenter at the National Postal Forum each year.

**'09 Jeremy Lillig** debuted his original artwork at the Wheat Gallery in Kansas City, Mo. on March 7. His show, entitled "Smudges: Observations on Perspective" attracted more than 500 art lovers.

**'09 Andy Perkins** completed his MFA in acting from Purdue University last year. Since then, he has been heavily involved with the theatre community in Kansas City. He performed and taught at the Coterie Theatre, the Heart of America Shakespeare Festival, the Metropolitan Ensemble Theatre, the Living Room Theatre, the Fishtank Performance Studio and the KC Fringe Festival. He is also a regular performer for the Kansas City Improv Company and represented by Exposure Talent Agency.

**'10 Steven Chung's** new exhibit, "Observation & Impulse," featuring new works on paper, took place on Sunday, January 12,

2014, in Philadelphia. Steven works for the award-winning interior design firm, Weixler Peterson Luzi, and studies at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art.

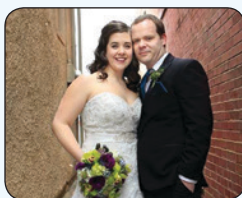
**'10 Cristina (Baker) Cowan** has taken on a new and exciting role at Avila University as assistant athletic director.



**'10 Jessica (Armstrong) Hassler** and her husband John welcomed daughter Charlotte to the world on October 16, 2013.



**'10 Heath Roberts** and his wife welcomed Willow Grace Roberts to the family on January 26, 2014. She weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 20 inches long.



**'10 Jennifer (Lee) Springman** married Scott Springman on March 1, 2014 in St. Louis. The couple resides in Gray Summit, Mo. Jennifer is the district administrative assistant at Target.

**'11 Kat Guyer** is an ESL/ELL coordinator at KC Frontier School of Excellence in Kansas City, Mo. She also recently joined the Avila Alumni Board of Directors as a board member.



**'11 Paige Solomon**, an Avila Glitter Girl alumna, was named, for the second year, to the Kansas City Chiefs Cheerleading Team.

# Alumni All-Stars Congratulations!



**Lauren McCarthy '07** is the first female and youngest president of the Kansas City-area Automobile Owner's Association. As such, she served as president for the 2014 KC Auto Show, which this year welcomed famous comedian and former Tonight Show host Jay Leno as a guest. Lauren, in her role as car show president, had the honor of introducing Leno to the crowd. Lauren also was recognized as a 2014 Rising Star of Philanthropy at NonProfit Connect's Philanthropy Awards Luncheon in May.



**Jan Regan '63** appearing here with Ron Slepitzka, Ph.D., CSJA, was awarded Volunteer of the Year by NonProfit Connect, a highly-respected organization in the Kansas City area. Jan was honored for her extensive impact/service to the Ronald McDonald House.

## Calling all Avila College Class of 1989 Alumni

Reunite to celebrate 25 years during Homecoming 2014!

Visit your Class Reunion website for the latest reunion details

at [www.avila.edu/Alumni/homecoming/reunions/25](http://www.avila.edu/Alumni/homecoming/reunions/25) and join the Avila College

Facebook Group at [www.facebook.com/groups/308377279315724](https://www.facebook.com/groups/308377279315724).





'12 **Emilee Bickleman** recently started a new job as the executive administrative assistant to the general manager and VIP Coordinator at Hotel Sorella on the Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Mo.

'12 **Shellye Tabor** is the event/space coordinator at Avila University. She celebrated 10 years at Avila in March and enjoys welcoming the public to the Avila campus and assisting them with their special event needs.

'13 **Tim Aderman** is completing his yearlong service in Chicago through Amate House as the volunteer coordinator at Lawn-dale Christian Legal Center.

'13 **Chance Alberswerth** began a new position in March this year as defensive line coach for Hastings College in Hastings, Neb.

'13 **Dianne Winter** was recently accepted into the medical school program at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. She will begin classes in the fall.

'13 **Erin Penney** has been working as a NICU nurse at Shawnee Mission Medical Center in Overland Park, Kan. since July of 2013. It was the job she had always hoped for after graduating with her nursing degree. She feels blessed every day to be doing what she loves!

'13 **Robin Rowland** continues to be an active volunteer in the Kansas City community in her free time. She recently became a board member for the Junior League of Kansas City, Mo., an organization she has been involved with since 2008. When she's not working or volunteering, she enjoys spending time with her husband and son.

'13 **Kevin Stone** graduated from Avila's Advantage program in May 2013 with a bachelor of arts in human resources. One month after graduation, he began working at Adaptive Solutions Group as a technical recruiter. He feels strongly that his degree definitely helped him get the job.

'13 **Priscilla Subramaniyam** continues to be deeply committed to charitable causes, including the Susan G. Komen, Greater Kansas City affiliate. After being actively involved in different committees for Susan G. Komen during the past few years, Priscilla will be serving as the chairman of fundraising for the Cure Committee for this year's 2014 Race for the Cure, which will be Sunday, August 10 at Union Station in Kansas City, Mo.

## *in memoriam*

'39 **Louise Mae Dold**, passed away on October 9, 2013. She attended the College of St. Teresa before transferring.

'48 **Martha Lelah Donnelly**, passed away on January 27, 2014. She attended the College of St. Teresa before transferring.

'50 **Barbara Jean Clark**, passed away on December 2, 2013. She received a diploma in nursing from St. Teresa College, now Avila University.

'51 **Wilma (Ogden) Nice**, 82, of Shawnee, Kan., passed away Nov. 16, 2013 at Overland Park Regional Medical Center. Wilma graduated from the Avila University – then College of St. Teresa - Department of Nursing in 1951 and worked at several area hospitals, including St. Joseph Medical Center.

'59 **Catherine Marie Zolnowski**, passed away February 19, 2014. She received a bachelor of science in nursing from Avila University, then College of St. Teresa.

'63 **Lurline Iris Nitschke**, passed away November 12, 2013. She received a bachelor of arts in education at Avila University, then Avila College.

'64 **Judith Ann Guyn**, passed away on December 1, 2013. She received a bachelor of science in nursing at Avila University, then Avila College.

'67 **Margaret Darline Hagan**, passed away on February 9, 2014. She received a bachelor of arts in elementary education from Avila University, then Avila College.

'74 **Maureen Patricia "Rene" Sebus**, 62, passed away January 26, 2014. She received a bachelor of arts in special education at Avila University, then Avila College.

'77 **Nancy Jean Gray**, passed away on November 9, 2013. She received a bachelor of arts in English from Avila University, then Avila College.

'79 **Raymond J. Vallejo**, passed away October 15, 2013. He received a bachelor of arts in administration of justice at Avila University, then Avila College.

'91 **Rubie May Anderson**, passed away November 26, 2013. She received a bachelor of science in nursing from Avila University, then Avila College.

'91 **Sherry Marcia Krug**, passed away October 4, 2013. She received a bachelor of science in elementary education from Avila University, then Avila College.

'01 **Seth Boyer**, 36, passed away March 11, 2014. He received a degree in communications from Avila College, now Avila University.

'12 **Tisha L. Blankenship-Turner**, passed away December 24, 2013. She received a bachelor of arts in English from Avila University.

**Charles J. Berkel**, a friend of Avila University, passed away on November 4, 2013.

**John H. Bolin**, a friend of Avila University, passed away on January 7, 2014.

**Kevin Mark Hart**, a friend of Avila University, passed away December 3, 2013.

**Crosby R. Kemper**, a friend of Avila University, passed away January 2, 2014.

**Helm Lillis**, a friend of Avila University, passed away January 5, 2014.

**Robert E. Nestel**, a friend of Avila University, passed away December 20, 2013.

*To make a memorial gift, please visit [avila.edu/give](http://avila.edu/give)  
or call 816.501.2450*

## *Stay Connected!*

We want to hear from you!

Job promotion, new baby,  
recent travels, new home?  
Let us know so we can share  
your good news!

Email your news to [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu)  
or check out the Class Notes form  
at [avila.edu/alumni](http://avila.edu/alumni).



CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
1916-2016

Avila's Centennial Celebration  
is coming in 2016,  
and the plans have begun.

Send your memories, photographs and stories to  
**Bob Luder**, Public Relations Specialist, via email at  
[bob.luder@avila.edu](mailto:bob.luder@avila.edu), on Facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/avilauniversity](http://www.facebook.com/avilauniversity) or postal mail  
us at: Avila University, Office of Marketing and  
Communications, 11901 Wornall Road, Kansas  
City, MO 64145. Be sure to include your current  
address and phone number.

*As Avila's 100-year plans develop,  
we'll keep you informed, so you can be part  
of the celebration!*



Avila University lost a true treasure with the passing of long-time history professor **Sherry Schirmer, Ph.D.**, who died peacefully at her Kansas City, Mo. home Jan. 25, 2014. Schirmer, 65, was Professor Emerita of History at Avila, where she had served on the faculty, teaching primarily U.S. History, for 21 years.

According to her students and colleagues, Schirmer was a dedicated and caring instructor who not only left her mark on the University, but the Kansas City community as well. She was a passionate historian and professor who also

was known for eccentricities in her teachings as well as for having a sardonic wit. In addition to her classes at Avila, Schirmer also facilitated internships with her students throughout the Kansas City area.

"She was a local fixture of Kansas City history," said colleague Jeffrey Myers, Ph.D., professor of history. "She also was a big believer in access to education as a form of empowerment."

Schirmer was author of several books on Kansas City history, and her fascination with the city's civil rights history is highlighted in one of her more recent and prominent works, entitled *A City Divided: The Racial Landscape of Kansas City, 1900-1960*.

She is one of three faculty members in Avila's history to be named Professor of the Year twice – in 1996-97 and 2003-04.

"Sherry inspired me to teach," said Beth Heide '95, who today serves as principal at Center High School in Kansas City, Mo. "She came to my wedding. In so many ways, she changed my life. I am deeply saddened."

In her honor, Schirmer's family suggests contributions "in memory of Dr. Sherry Schirmer" to the scholarship fund at Avila. Those wishing to make a memorial gift to honor Schirmer and her service to Avila's students can contact Robin Rowland, executive director of development, at 816.501.2450 or [robin.rowland@avila.edu](mailto:robin.rowland@avila.edu). Online memorial gifts can also be securely made at [avila.edu/give](http://avila.edu/give).

## STUDENTS AND ALUMS PAY TRIBUTE TO *Sherry Schirmer, Ph.D.*

**Alexzis Thomson**, senior: She was one of my first professors at Avila. She was so sweet and had such a fun personality! My thoughts are with her family.

**Eric Schroer**, '97, '02: As a history major, Dr. Schirmer had a huge impact on my educational journey at Avila. I appreciate all she did for me. May God comfort her husband and family during this difficult time. Matthew 25:23 - 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'

**Jake Zinn** '11: Dr. Schirmer was one of the most passionate and fun educators I've had. Truly a sad loss.

**Susan Burdge** '03: She made an impact on my life and others as well, I'm sure. This is sad news.

**Regina Maddux** '09: Dr. Schirmer made history fun and interesting! She is the reason why I decided to get a Minor in History. Rest in peace and say hello to our famous people in history!

**Keri Abell** '01: This is such sad news to hear. Dr. Schirmer was such an amazing advisor for me and I know so many people that enjoyed history because of her. She will be greatly missed. My thoughts are with her husband.

**Trista Roberts** '03: I loved the history classes I took from Dr. Schirmer. She was full of life and loved what she was teaching. My condolences to her family.

**Jennifer Audsley-Moore** '05: Dr. Schirmer was probably the most dynamic and engaging professor I encountered throughout undergrad and graduate school. Lectures were always stimulating and often entertaining. She made herself accessible to students to the point of including her home phone number on the syllabus!

**Kathie Gridley** '06, '10: Dr. Schirmer was the reason I came to Avila. The day I toured Avila to see if I wanted to

attend school and be a history major, Dr. Schirmer greeted me warmly and explained the program. Then, she said the clincher: "I want you here. You have so much to contribute. I would love to have you as my student." She made me feel important and not just a number. As a teacher, I have the lessons I learned from Dr. Schirmer constantly running through my head.

**Matt Wilkie** '07: Dr. Schirmer embodied the very essence of history, which I strive to promote in my own classroom, which is bringing history to life through first-hand experiences.

**Maggie Carthen** '14: She was one of the first professors I had to truly ignite my passion for American history. I will always remember her intelligence, wit and humor that she incorporated in each and every one of her lessons.



# Hall Pass

*Former baseball coach enters athletics hall of fame*



Jim Huber Sr. never played baseball at a highly-competitive level. And, he'd never coached at the collegiate level when he accepted a position on Avila's baseball coaching staff in 1993 and took over the program the following year.

None of that prevented Huber from embarking on what turned into an 11-year run that built the Eagles into one of the top baseball programs in the Kansas City area and beyond: three consecutive seasons - of at least 40 victories in the 1990s, multiple conference and district championships, as well as multiple Coach of the Year honors. The Eagles' 50-victory season in 1999 under his leadership has never been topped. Huber is the winningest baseball coach in Avila history and one of the most successful coaches to lead an Avila athletics program.

This spring, he was the latest inductee into the University's Athletics Hall of Fame. Huber was honored during a ceremony before the Eagles' double-header April 5 against MidAmerica Nazarene.

Huber was hired by vice president for academic affairs Tom Lease in 1994 after serving as an assistant coach for one year under Mark Tobin and, although he knew the baseball portion of the job well, he knew little about the college part.

"When Tom asked, I didn't think I had the background," Huber said. "Mainly, the recruiting and academics."

Huber said he also was told he'd never win coaching at Avila, but it didn't take long for him to prove that prediction mistaken. His first season, the Eagles won 35 games and made the NAIA playoffs.

In 1997, he was presented with the St. Teresa Award by then-Avila President Larry Kramer for his long-time service to Avila.

Huber knows the success never would have come were it not for the help of a lot of great people along the way - from players like Gary Haarmann, Avila's first NAIA All-American baseball player, to Dave Klein, a key assistant coach who was with Huber through 2002, and Cindy Butler, who worked in Admissions and helped the coach with eligibility and compliance issues.

Huber's ties to Avila also run deeper than his involvement. Both his son and daughter attended Avila and played on sports teams here, and son Jim Jr. coached on the men's basketball staff. Also, when Huber coached, the job was part-time, so he also was paid for keeping up the University's athletics fields. But, he told Kramer to take his pay for that job and put it back into the baseball program.

"It means more to me to join some of the people who are already in the Hall of Fame," he said. "It's not an award strictly for me, but for others who have put in the work to get there." 🏆



# On your mark, get set, GO!

## First track and field program to compete in spring 2015

**A**vila will add track and field to its stable of men's and women's athletic teams, with its first official, competitive team scheduled to start in the spring of 2015.

Dave Denny, who's coached the Eagles men's and women's cross country teams since their inception in 2010, will be the University's first head coach in the sport.

For Denny, the decision to add track and field is one he's been anticipating.

"I really want to get this program started," said Denny, who's coached cross country and track at the high school level and collegiately in the Kansas City area for more than 30 years. "Not having track has been a hindrance in recruiting for cross country. Cross country and track just go together. Our athletes want to do both."

Denny said he's in the midst of building a program now, and his intentions are to begin building at the grass roots level – that is,

approaching students currently on campus who might want to compete in the sport.

Denny said the official team probably won't get started until around Christmastime. In spring 2015, he anticipates competing in 3-4 meets and in the Heart of America Athletic Conference meet.

"The first thing is to get the students recruited," said Denny, who hopes to have 20-25 student-athletes on the original roster. "Once we get those, we can start developing the program."

"I've been getting a number of phone calls and emails. It's pretty exciting. It's going to be a lot of work. But, once we get the cross country and distance program going, I think the rest will just blossom." 🏆



## Coach Carter inspires home team

**K**en Carter, the former high school basketball coach who was the subject and inspiration for the 2005 movie *Coach Carter*, starring Samuel L. Jackson, was a recent guest of the Avila University men's basketball team.

Carter, who's also been a business owner and education activist, met with the Eagles players following practice on Monday, Dec. 16, then attended their game against

Harris-Stowe State University the next evening, a game won by the Eagles 100-84. Carter then went to dinner with both teams following the game.

Carter, who was known for honoring academic performance and behavior above athletics while coaching at Richmond High School, also gave all players and coaches signed DVDs of the movie named after him. 🏆



## Let's dance and cheer!

**T**he Avila University Cheer and Dance teams took home the 2014 Heart of America Athletic Conference Spirit Squad Championship in February at Baker University's Collins Center in Baldwin City, KS.

Avila cheer coach Melissa Shipman said bringing the title back to Avila is an amazing feeling for her and her cheerleaders. "We are so excited about bringing the banner back to Avila," said Shipman. "The ladies on both of these teams worked so hard, and truly encompass what it means to be a student athlete here at Avila. As a coach, we are glad these teams both get to feel the honor of being recognized within our conference as being champions, and I couldn't be more proud of each of them!" 🏆



## AVILA UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES: 2013–2014

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**Amy D. Cline '96**

Bryan Cave LLP

**Virginia Coppinger '58**

Community Advocate

**Derek Feagans '95**

Bernstein-Rein

**Thomas J. Fritzlen, M.D.**

Physicians Reference Laboratory  
(Retired)

**Johnny Ingram, Jr. '83**

AT&T

**Kay Julian '82**

National MS Society

**John Kopecky '97**

Kopecky Consulting

**Steve Lampone**

Kansas City Parks & Recreation (Retired)

**Gregory Alan Lever '85**

National Institute for Construction  
Excellence

**Autumn Markley '97**

Goppert Financial

**Blane Markley '97**

Spencer Fane Britt and Browne, LLP

**Lauren McCarthy '07**

McCarthy Auto Group

**Julie McManus '67**

Community Advocate

**Judge Edith Louise Messina '66, '06**

16th Judicial Circuit Court of Jackson  
County

**Mona Moran, RN, BSN '96**

Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics

**Ann O'Hare**

The Historical Society of New Santa Fe

**Jeanne Christine Rau-Flattery '92**

Millennium International

**Heath Marshall Roberts '10**

Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics

**Belinda Troxler '88**

Community Advocate

**Tim Waris**

St. Thomas More

**Julia Ann Weiss '78, MBA '83**

Saint Luke's Cancer Institute

**Linda Wiersma '97, '02**

Sunflower Elementary School

**Faith Wilson, Ph.D.**

St. Teresa's Academy (Retired)

**John Woolway**

Vantage Investment Partners, LLC

## Before you go...



## Honor a Classmate

We're very proud of the accomplishments of our 13,000+ alumni around the world. They are making a positive impact professionally and personally – and the Alumni Association wants to recognize them and their efforts!

Alumni nomination categories include:

- Outstanding Alumni Award
- Honorary Alumni Award
- Alumni Service Award
- Alumni Achievement Award
- Graduate Alumni Award
- Recent Alumni Award
- Honored Class Award

Avila Alumni Awards are presented Homecoming Weekend on Sunday, September 28, 2014 on the Avila campus. Nominations are due May 9, 2014 to the Avila Alumni Department and can be made online at [avila.edu/alumni](http://avila.edu/alumni) or by mailing a nomination form to: Vanessa Herring, Director of Alumni & Donor Outreach, Avila University, 11901 Wornall Rd., Kansas City, MO 64145.

For more information about the awards nomination process, call 816.501.3780 or email [alumni@avila.edu](mailto:alumni@avila.edu).

Photo: Laura Rupp '73, Debbie (Nickerson) Collins '73, Cindy (Nicholson) Bichelmeyer '73, Kay Tanner Scott and Mary Ellen (Fischer) Clark '73 attended the Alumni Awards Luncheon to celebrate with their classmate, Elaine Domian '73, Ph.D. (center), who was awarded the 2013 Alumni Achievement Award.

# Avila Heritage

**W**hen Ibraheem Badejo arrived in the U.S. from his native Nigeria at age 17, he had barely a penny to his name. A wide-eyed innocent, broke and in a foreign land for the first time, Badejo was a young man in need of a hand.

He received the assistance he needed at Avila University. Not only did the University provide scholarship assistance to help pay for his education, but Avila faculty – led by current provost and vice president for academic affairs S. Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D. – staff and fellow students provided Badejo additional support that helped him graduate with a degree in chemistry in three years. That degree has proven instrumental in getting Badejo to where he is today – senior director of new ventures at Johnson & Johnson.

Badejo said then-Avila President S. Olive Louise Dallavis even gave him a custodial job around campus to help him make some extra money.

“I still reach out to S. Marie,” Badejo said over the phone from his office in Cambridge, Mass. “She was instrumental to who I am and what I’ve become.

“She believed in me, while I did not.”

Badejo is giving back to Avila by means of a cash pledge over multiple years to go toward construction of the Marie Joan Harris, CSJ, Ph.D. Science & Health Complex to be completed next fall in O’Rielly Hall. Johnson & Johnson is matching the gift with \$2 for every \$1. Badejo also is including Avila in his estate plans with a bequest.

“I just feel a sense of commitment,” he said. “You give back to where you’ve been blessed. If I lived in Kansas City, I would teach at Avila for free. No questions asked.”



*Be Inspired.*



## Ibraheem Badejo '84

## Securing Avila's Heritage

Making a bequest to Avila in your estate to benefit future Avila students is just one way you can join The Avila Heritage Society. The Heritage Society was established in 1988 to recognize the remarkable contributions of Avila alumni and friends who have made provisions in their estate plans or lifetime planned gifts to support the future needs of the University. Such provisions may include:

- Bequests through Wills and Trusts
- Charitable Remainder or Lead Trusts
- Appreciated Securities
- Real Estate and Life Estates in Homes
- Gift Annuities
- Life Insurance Policies

To find out more about joining Avila's Heritage Society or the gift vehicles above, please contact Keith Jaloma, director of major gifts, at 816.501.3696.





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We're saying

**THANK YOU**

to **YOU**, our generous alumni and supporters,  
with a free, delicious BBQ dinner on campus!

**Tuesday, May 13, 2014**

**5:00–7:00 P.M.**

**Avila University**

**on the Jeanne Hamilton Olofson Plaza**  
(Marian Center Dining Hall if inclement weather)

Join us in recognizing

**Joe and Sue Fahey**

as we present them with the Avila Medal of Honor.

R.S.V.P. by May 7 to

Robin Rowland at 816-501-2450  
or [Robin.Rowland@avila.edu](mailto:Robin.Rowland@avila.edu)

You may also RSVP online at [www.avila.edu/donorbbq](http://www.avila.edu/donorbbq)

This invitation is extended to you and one guest.  
(each additional guest is \$5.00)

**JOIN US FOR FOOD, FUN AND FELLOWSHIP!**

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**THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**  
**THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

**AVILA UNIVERSITY**  
**MAY 13**  
**2014 DONOR BBQ**

 **AVILA UNIVERSITY**

*Be Inspired.*



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**September 26, 27 & 28**

Dear College of St. Teresa, Avila College and Avila University  
alumni – save the date for Avila University's 2014 Homecoming.



Classes being honored:  
1954 1964 1974 1984 1994 2004  
1959 1969 1979 1989 1999 2009

For more information, please visit:  
[avila.edu/alumni/homecoming](http://avila.edu/alumni/homecoming),  
or call Vanessa Herring at 816-501-3780  
or email [Vanessa.Herring@avila.edu](mailto:Vanessa.Herring@avila.edu).

*We're looking forward to welcoming you to campus!*

Homecoming

**2014**